THURSDAY
September 26, 2024

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
22 Pages ₹ 6.00

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RNI No. KARENG/1970/49945

Vol. 55 • No. 231

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ADVISORY TO JUDGES

Stop making casual, biased remarks: SC

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HEZBOLLAH STRIKES DEEP

Missile fired at Tel Aviv, no damage reported

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KANGANA WITHDRAWS STATEMENT

Congress seeks Modi's stance on remarks

NEWS » PAGE 16

LIMITED ACCESS

China's warning shots with vital minerals

It seems to be perfecting the restriction strategy

EDITORIAL » PAGE 12

TORCHBEARER

Harmanpreet seeks success in T20 WC

SPORTS » PAGE 19

Mukti Ranjan Pratap Roy

Mahalakshmi murder case suspect ends life in Odisha

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU/BHUBANESHWAR

Four days after the gruesome murder of 29-year-old Mahalakshmi was discovered at her house at Vyalikaval here, the prime suspect in the case, Mukti Ranjan Pratap Roy, who was on the run, was found to have ended his life near his native place in Odisha on Wednesday.

Mahalakshmi was killed on the first floor of a three-storey house, and chopped body parts were stuffed in a fridge. The murder had sent shock waves in the city.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 2

57% turnout in peaceful Phase 2 polling in J&K

Reasi district records highest voting percentage of 74.7 followed by Pooch at 73.8; Srinagar's turnout exceeds Lok Sabha figure; no booth reported any incident warranting a repoll, says EC

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

Enthusiastic voters formed long queues at most polling booths since morning across the 26 constituencies as the second phase of the Assembly election in Jammu & Kashmir on Wednesday registered a turnout of 57.03% till 11.50 p.m.

"There has not been any incident that calls for a re-polling. There were 3,502 polling stations and no polling booth had a voting percentage in single digit. In Srinagar, the polling percentage exceeded the Lok Sabha figures by over 5%," J&K Chief Electoral Officer P.K. Pole said.

Election Commission data of turnout till 11.50 p.m. show Reasi district with the highest voting percentage of 74.7, followed by Poonch (73.8%), Rajouri (70.95%), Budgam (62.98%), Ganderbal (62.51%), and Srinagar (29.81%).

Srinagar showed a marginal increase from the 27% in the 2014 Assembly election.

"These elections are history in the making, the echoes of which will be carried through posterity. The valleys and the mountains, which had once witnessed fear and boycott, are now taking part in the democratic festivities or *Jashn-e-Jamhuriyat*," Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said in Delhi.

People queue up to cast their votes at a polling booth in Srinagar in the second phase of Assembly election on Wednesday. IMRAN NISSAR

Rajouri, Poonch and Reasi districts, close to the Line of Control and a centre of militant attacks this year, saw long queues outside polling stations. "I voted to safeguard my country's interest," said Nitu Mia, a transgender voter from Reasi. Vaishali Sharma and Tavishi, first-time voters from Reasi, expressed happiness over attaining the age to vote.

In the Kashmir Valley, there were long queues at polling booths in Budgam and Ganderbal. However, voter response was subdued in many constituencies in Srinagar district.

CONTINUED ON
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KASHMIR CONFLICT
» PAGE 12
MORE REPORTS ON
» PAGE 15

Bengaluru court orders Lokayukta probe against CM

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A special court in Bengaluru on Wednesday directed the Lokayukta police in Mysuru to register a criminal case against Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and others on the alleged illegalities in the allotment of 14 sites worth ₹56 crore to his wife by the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA).

The court directed the Superintendent of Police of the Lokayukta police to invoke provisions on prevention of corruption, prohibition of benami properties and land grabbing under various laws.

While exercising its power under Section 156 (3) of the Code of Criminal Procedure (Cr.PC), the court directed the Superintendent of Police to submit the investigation report within three months. Santhosh Gajanan Bhat, judge of the Special Court of Sessions that deals with criminal cases against former and incumbent MLAs and MPs, issued the direction on a private complaint filed by social activist Snehamayi Krishna of Mysuru. Mr. Siddaramaiah's wife, Parvathi B.M., has been named as an accused in the complaint.

Siddaramaiah

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» PAGE 14
RELATED REPORTS ON
» PAGE 8

NEARBY

Body of Kerala lorry driver found in river

BELAGAVI
As many as 71 days after they were reported missing following a landslip, the body of Arjun, a lorry driver from Kerala, and his vehicle were found in the Gangavali at Shirur in Uttara Kannada district on Wednesday.
» Page 6

Leopard rescued at Electronics City

BENGALURU
After a week-long round-the-clock operation, the Forest Department officials on Wednesday rescued the male leopard, which was spotted in Electronics City here on September 17. » Page 2

Sri Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister
Govt. of Karnataka

KWIN CITY
ಕ್ವಿನ್ ಸಿಟಿ

Sri D.K. Shivakumar
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister
Govt. of Karnataka

A NEW CITY. A NEW HOPE.

Launch of KWIN City by the Hon'ble Chief Minister Sri Siddaramaiah
Date: Sept. 26th, 2024 at 11:00 AM | Venue: Banquet Hall, Vidhana Soudha

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KWIN City (KHIR City) is unique in its holistic approach to integrating knowledge, health, innovation, and research within a single, self-sustaining ecosystem. Unlike other planned centers that may focus on a single aspect, KWIN City combines world-class educational institutions, advanced healthcare facilities, cutting-edge research centers, and a vibrant startup culture, all supported by sustainable infrastructure and smart connectivity.

Location Highlights

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- Located on the Satellite Town Ring Road (STRR) Between Dobbaspete and Doddaballapura
- Just 45 minutes from Bengaluru International Airport
- 50 km from the city centre

Sri M.B. Patil, Hon'ble Minister for Large & Medium Industries and Infrastructure Development, GoK, explaining the concept of KWIN City to Hon'ble Chief Minister.

As enshrined in our Constitution, - to safeguard public property and to abjure violence is the fundamental duty of every citizen of India.

Department of Industries and Commerce, Karnataka

Learn more at www.kwincity.com

High-flying Unnathi and her progression into a new challenge

Having won many medals in the 200m sprint and 100m hurdles, Unnathi's move to the 400m hurdles — considered the toughest in track and field — has been encouraged by her father and coach Aiyappa

K. MURALI KUMAR

Ashwin Achal

Track athlete Unnathi Aiyappa is adept at two events – 200m sprint and 100m hurdles. She has the medals to prove it.

In the last six months, Unnathi has stepped on the podium in international and domestic competitions. She won bronze in the 100m hurdles at the Asian Under-20 championships in Dubai, and created meet records in the 200m and 100m hurdles at the recent South Asian Junior Athletics meet at Chennai.

In the Federation Cup in May, Unnathi went past the experienced Srabani Nanda to win the 200m.

As the transition to the senior level beckons, Unnathi has decided to focus on a new event – 400m hurdles. Given her inexperience in this event, this poses a big challenge.

The move to 400m hurdles – considered the toughest among track and field events – was encouraged by her father and coach, former athlete B.P. Aiyappa. More guidance comes from Unnathi's mother, former Olympic heptathlete Pramila Aiyappa.

"My dad and I have always talked about changing my event to 400m hurdles. My father was also a 400m athlete. He knows that I have the speed, stride length and talent for 400m hurdles. Our plan is to switch when I get to the seniors," Unnathi said.

Encouraging start

Unnathi gave 400m hurdles a shot at the Junior Federation Cup at Lucknow, where she claimed a bronze medal. It was an encouraging result for a first time attempt.

"I entered the Junior Federation Cup with low expectations. I competed in the 400m hurdles for the first time, and was happy to finish third.

"I ran the 400m hurdles instead of the 200m. I ran a timing 59.80s, which is very good for a first time attempt. It was a little test that I set for myself. This was the start of a slow transition," Unnathi said.

"Even in the 200m, you will notice that my stride length opens up a lot. I have a combination of good frequency and stride length. My dad believes that Indians are very good at 400m hurdles. As a coach, he knows what is best for me. Even for me personally, the 400m hurdles has always been attractive. I do love all hurdles events," she said.

Increased intensity

Unnathi will soon begin to train in this new event with increased intensity. "I'm on a break now. In this off-season, I will train and start my workout routines in 400m hurdles. I am aware that there is a lot of hard work in store for me, but I am excited," she said.

The 19-year-old was not enthused by her double gold at the recent South Asian Junior Athletics championship. Her body was not ready for the competition, as she had just returned from the World Athletics Under-20 Championships held at Lima (Peru).

"I was very disappointed with my performances in Chennai. It was nowhere close to my best. The 200m was comparatively okay – I clocked 23.91s while my personal best is 23.85s.

"But for the 100m hurdles, I was not fit at all. I had travelled on a 40-hour flight from Lima just five days before the South Asian championship began. I could not do much in those five days due to jet lag.

"I slept through the first two days, and did a bit of training later. I don't think my body was in good condition. I wish I could have done better, but I cannot do much when the body does not respond," Unnathi said.

The packed schedule this year has forced Unnathi to train that much harder. "My dad and I knew that this year was a crucial one, because there were so many international meets. We needed that extra focus to win medals. It has been a very hard season, but enjoyable. This season's success serves as great motivation for bigger challenges that lie ahead," Unnathi said.

> My dad and I have always talked about changing my event to 400m hurdles. My father was also a 400m athlete. He knows that I have the speed, stride length and talent for 400m hurdles. Our plan is to switch when I get to the seniors

Unnathi's willingness to go that extra mile comes from her unending love for the sport. "To be honest, I do not like doing anything other than sports. I realise that a sportsperson's career does not last forever. I will probably lose my ability to run in 15-20 years," she said.

There was disappointment, however, in store at the World Athletics Under-20 Championships, where Unnathi could not make it past the qualification rounds in the 200m and 100m hurdles.

Outside the track, Unnathi is pursuing a degree from REVA University in Bengaluru. A second year student, Unnathi is happy to have the full support of her university.

"I'm studying journalism, economics and political science now. I like journalism – maybe I can do something in this field some time in the future.

"REVA University has been very supportive. They give me leeway when it comes to attendance and academics. I'm allowed to just write my exams. It is hard to handle academics and sports, but so far I have been able to handle both aspects," she said.

Like most sportspersons her age, Unnathi is active on social media. It is a window into her life – an insight into what it takes to make it as an athlete.

"All sportspersons are on social media now, especially people of my generation. If you share your achievements on social media, it reaches a whole range of people. Most youngsters and teenagers believe this," Unnathi said.

Inspiration

Unnathi terms her parents as her "number one inspiration". After from mother and father, Unnathi looks up to women's 400m hurdles world record holder Sydney McLaughlin and 2023 World Championships 400m hurdles winner Femke Bol.

"When it comes to idols, my parents are number one. That is quite obvious. Sydney McLaughlin is another big inspiration. I watch a lot of videos of Femke Bol. Her training and workout routines are tremendous," Unnathi said.

Unnathi stated that she would love to meet these global superstars.

She did get the chance to interact with Australian sprinter Torrie Lewis, who competed in the Paris Olympics.

Torrie claimed silver in the women's 200m at Lima. "We were very happy and excited to be around an Olympian," Unnathi said.

Unnathi also praised Jamaica's upcoming star Alana Reid, who claimed the 100m gold with a timing of 11.18s at the World Athletics U-20 Championships.

The World University Games is Unnathi's next target. "To qualify and win a medal at the World University Games is the main objective for now. I will continue to compete in a few senior and junior events as well," she said.

Looking at the big picture, Unnathi has big dreams. "The 2026 Asian Games is on my mind. I need to win a medal there. I also want to qualify for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics," Unnathi said.

THE GIST

In the last six months, Unnathi has stepped on the podium in international and domestic competitions.

She won bronze in the 100m hurdles at the Asian Under-20 championships in Dubai, and created meet records in the 200m and 100m hurdles at the recent South Asian Junior Athletics meet at Chennai.

In the Federation Cup in May, Unnathi went past the experienced Srabani Nanda to win the 200m.

The World University Games is Unnathi's next target.

(Public Works Department)
Chikkaballapur Division, Chikkaballapur

Invitation for Tender (I.F.T) No.12/2024-25 Date:24.09.2024

(For Road/Building-Improvements/Construction Works –As per standard Bid Document KW 1 & 4 in two cover system.)

On behalf of The Governor of Karnataka, as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 2000, the undersigned invite tenders for works in two cover system through KPP Portal from eligible contractors registered in PWD. Those interested in participating in the tender can submit the tenders **from Date: 24.09.2024 to 01.10.2024 up to 04:00 pm**. Further details may be obtained from the above office during hours on works days or from websites **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Chikkaballapur

DIPR/CHIKKABALLAPUR/R.O.NO:199/KSMCA/2024-25

RAJIV GANDHI UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES, KARNATAKA
4th 'T' Block, Jayanagara, Bengaluru – 560 041.
Ph No.080-26961928 Fax-080-26961929

No:RGU/PROC/Account/10/2024-25 Date: 23.09.2024

E-TENDER NOTIFICATION (RFP)

The Registrar Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences invites tender for Day-to-Day Accounting of Financial Transaction to RGUHS. More details on the services are provided in the attached Terms of Reference. **(Tender Reference Number: RGUHSK/2024-25/SE0007)**

Tender document available for downloaded	24/09/2024 11:57 Hrs
Tender Pre Bid meeting	03/10/2024 11:50 Hrs
Last date for receipt of Tender	10/10/2024 17:30 Hrs
Opening of Technical Bid	14/10/2024 11:30 Hrs
Opening of Financial Bid	16/10/2024 11:30 Hrs
Place of Opening of Tender	Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences, Bengaluru

More details can be fetched from website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sd/-
REGISTRAR

DIPR/SI/2180/2024-25

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN : U40109KA1999SGC025521)

No. SEE/Tr(M)/BMAZ(S)/EE(O)/AEE-1/2024-25/F-180/4808-09 Date: 25.09.2024

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(THROUGH KARNATAKA PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PORTAL ONLY)

KPTCL invites bid against **Enquiry No:** KPTCL/SEE/TR(M)/BMAZ(S)/EE(O)/AEE-1/24-25/EPR-08, Call-2, Dated 22.08.2024 for the work of increasing the Vertical Clearance by providing DD+6, NBT tower between loc no 08 & 09, of existing 66kV Hebbala-Banaswadi (tapped to Pottery Road) SC Line near Dhobi Ghat, HBR Layout, 2nd Block, 80 feet road in TLM Sub-Division, Hoody, Bengaluru, in the jurisdiction of BMAZ South Circle.

The Bids will be received through KPP Portal mode only. The detailed notification regarding the subject tenders can be got by logging on to **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyperlink 'E Procurement KPTCL' or to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in on or after 25.09.2024.** Any other details can be had from the office of the undersigned.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer Ele, Tr (M), BMAZ, South Circle, KPTCL, Office Complex, Ground Floor, A.R. Circle, Bengaluru-560009. Ph: 22386686/85

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, GLORIA Christal, D/o Lawrence Jayasingh Christy, R/a No.6, 10th Main Road, Vasanthanagar, Bangalore-560001 have changed my name to Gloria Christal L vide affidavit dt: 24.09.2024 sworn before Notary P.G.Unnikrishnan, B'lore

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF THE HONOURABLE MUNSIFF'S, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
O S No. 874 of 2017

PLAINTIFF: V.Antony, aged 78 years, S/o. Vareed, X'ian, Residing at Thyvilla, Karakkamandapam, Nemom, Thiruvanantha puram.

DEFENDANTS 10 & 11: 1. Mary Magdaline Paul, aged 70 years, D/o. John Pereira residing at Aiyswarya, Mokshamarga, House No: 9/13, Cross IInd stage, Sidhartha Layout, Mysore 570011 and also Mareena Cottage, Thottamkonam, Karamkode P.O, Kollam 691579. **2. Mary Laila J Pereira,** aged 68 years, D/o. John Pereira, residing at Aiyswarya, Mokshamarga, House No:9/13, Cross IInd stage, Sidhartha Layout, Mysore 570011 and also "Aiswarya" House No:678, S.Layout, Mysore-11.

COURT SUMMONS TO DEFENDANTS 10 AND 11.: Plaintiff filed this suit for partition, and the same is posted to **7/10/2024** for appearance of Defendants 10 & 11 and if the aforesaid defendants 10 and 11 have any objection to passing decree, may appear in person or by authorized person on the said date at 11:00 AM before the Third Additional Munsiff Court of Thiruvananthapuram, otherwise the said suit will be disposed off in your absence. By order

G.S.Kalkura, Advocate for the plaintiff.

PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS
(Ordinary Original Civil Jurisdiction)
O.A. Nos. 684 and 685 of 2024 and A. Nos. 4949 and 4950 of 2024
in
C.S. (Comm Div) No. 178 of 2024

M/s. Star Health and Allied Insurance Co. Ltd.
Regd. Office:
No.1, New Tank Street,
Valluvar Kottam High Road,
Nungambakkam, Chennai - 600034
Rep. by its Chief Human Resources Officer
Mr. Sriram Ragunandhanan
...Plaintiff

-vs-

1. M/s. Telegram Messenger Inc.
71-75 Shelton Street,
Covent Garden,
London, WC2H 9JQ
2. M/s. Telegram FZ LLC
Business Central Towers,
Tower A, Office 1003/1004, P.O. Box 501919,
Dubai, United Arab Emirates
3. M/s. Cloudflare India Pvt Ltd
No. 215, Richmond Towers,
No. 12, Richmond Road,
Richmond Town,
Bangalore,
Karnataka 560025
4. M/s. Cloudflare, Inc
101 Townsend St,
San Francisco, CA 94107,
USA
5. Ashok Kumar
Address unknown
6. xenZen
Address unknown
...Defendants

PUBLIC NOTICE

We act on behalf our Client, M/s. Star Health and Allied Insurance Co. Ltd having their registered office at No.1, New Tank Street, Valluvar Kottam High Road, Nungambakkam, Chennai – 600034.

Our Client has filed C.S. (Comm Div) No. 178 of 2024 against the illegal hacking and unauthorized accessing of the confidential, sensitive and personal information of our Client, its customers, employees and business activities ("Data"), praying inter-alia for: Declaration that the aforesaid hacking and accessing of Data is illegal; Permanent Injunction restraining the Defendants from exhibiting or making available the Data online or in any other manner; and Permanent Injunction restraining the Defendants from exhibiting or displaying online or in any other manner, the trade names "Star", "Star Health", "Star Health Insurance" and logo and domain name, **www.starhealth.in** or any combinations thereof.

Our Client has also filed O.A. No. 684 of 2024 for a temporary injunction restraining the Defendants from exhibiting or displaying online or in any other manner, the trade names "Star", "Star Health", "Star Health Insurance" and logo and domain name, **www.starhealth.in** or any combinations thereof; O.A. No. 685 of 2024 for a temporary injunction restraining the Defendants from exhibiting or making available the Data online or in any other manner; A. No. 4949 of 2024 to direct the Defendants to disclose all information relating to the users and their accounts involved in creating the Telegram Bots and/or websites/links that make available the Data online or in any other manner; and A. No. 4950 of 2024 to direct the Defendants to forthwith takedown/delete all Telegram Bots and/or websites/links and its related user accounts that make available the Data online or in any other manner.

A copy of all the pleadings and typed set of documents is available at our office and may be collected at the address provided below.

The Hon'ble High Court of Madras was pleased to grant ad-interim injunction as prayed for by us in O.A. Nos. 684 and 685 of 2024 on 24.09.2024 and the order continues to remain in force as on date.

The Order dated 24.09.2024 is hereby brought to the notice of the general public and any person desirous to support or oppose the relief prayed for in O.A. Nos. 684 and 685 in C.S. (Comm Div.) 178 of 2024 may appear before the Hon'ble Court at the next date of hearing on **25.10.2024.**

Dated at Chennai on this the 26th day of September, 2024.
M/s. S. Ramasubramaniam & Associates, Advocates
First Floor, "Century Centre", New No. 75 (Old No. 39),
T.T.K Road, Chennai - 600 018.
E-mail- srsanda@gmail.com

CITY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, BIDAR

No:BMC/HS/CR-130 to 145/2024-25 Dated:-24-09-2024.

TENDER NOTIFCATION

1) Name of work DMA/2024-25/IND3543, DMA/2024-25/IND3552, DMA/2024-25/IND3557, DMA/2024-25/IND3559, DMA/2024-25/IND3560, DMA/2024-25/IND3561 DMA/2024-25/IND3562, DMA/2024-25/IND3563, DMA/2024-25/IND3564, DMA/2024-25/IND3551, DMA/2024-25/IND3565, DMA/2024-25/IND3566, DMA/2024-25/IND3567, DMA/2024-25/IND3545, 2) Estimated cost: As per e-portal, 3) Eligibility of Agency / Consultant: As per e-portal, 4) EMD amount: As per e-portal, 5) Last date for submission of tender 14-10-2024 upto 04.00 PM, 6) Technical bid opening 15-10-2024 at 04.30 PM, 7) Address for communication: Municipal Commissioner, City Municipal Council, Bidar, Pin code 585401, Email : itstaff_ulb_bidar@yahoo.com, 08482-240432, 8) Website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/

Sd/- Municipal Commissioner
City Municipal Council, Bidar

DIPR/Bidar/174/KSMC&A/2024-25

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
 # 49, East Wing, 4th & 5th Floor, Khanija Bhavan Race Course Road
Bengaluru – 560 001. Phone No. 080-22265383 website : www.kiadb.in

IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-23/438/2024-25 Date: 25.09.2024

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER
(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

Item Rate Tender under two cover bid system is invited as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Contractors who have got adequate financial resources, state of the art technology, suitable construction equipments, technical man power & sufficient past experience for the work of:

Name of the Works : (1) Construction of Storm Water Drain of length 340m between Road No. 21K & 21G at Plot No. 658 (Sub Layout) in Vasanthanarasapura Industrial Area 2nd Phase, Tumakuru District (Balance Work) **(2)** Formation of 18m wide road at Road No.07,18 & 12m wide road (Adjacent to Visaka Factory) including construction of RCC side drains & providing water supply pipeline network in Vasanthanarasapura Industrial Area Phase-1, Tumakuru (Balance Road lengths) **(3)** Construction of RCC Box Culvert across Road No.1, providing water supply network (left out reaches), filling of potholes, desilting of Storm Water Drain & Side Drains and Strengthening of Road Shoulders in Vasanthanarasapura Industrial Area 2nd Phase, Tumakuru. **(4)** Construction of RCC Storm water drains (Between Park7 & 14), Construction of RCC Box Culvert across Services Road & Road No. 6, Potholes, Desilting of Storm Water Drains & Side Drains and Strengthening of Road Shoulders in Vasanthanarasapura Industrial Area 2nd Phase, Tumakuru District.

The last date and time of receipt of tender is : **14.10.2024** upto **4.30 pm.**

Applicants May Download Bidding Documents from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sd/-
Chief Engineer-1, KIADB Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/2194/Zen/2024-25

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER (Through KPP Portal Only)

BWSSB invites tenders from registered agencies for the following works.

Office of the Chief Engineer (South), 7th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bengaluru - 560 009.

Sl. No.	Division	IFT Number		Amount put to tender EMD (in Rs,)	Last date & time for Submission of Tender	Date & time for Opening of Tender
1	South-1	BWSSB/EES-1/TO/AE/1616/ 2024-25 Date: 19.09.2024 (Reserved for SC Category)		Rs. 42,45,667/- Rs. 42,500/-	10.10.2024 upto 4:00 p.m.	15.10.2024 after 4:00 p.m.
2		BWSSB/EES-1/AE/TO/1617/ 2024-25 Date: 19.09.2024 (Reserved for SC Category)		Rs. 97,81,672/- Rs. 97,900/-		
3		BWSSB/EES-1/AE/TO/1618/ 2024-25 Date: 19.09.2024 (Reserved for ST Category)		Rs. 99,49,659/- Rs. 99,500/-		
4		BWSSB/EES-1/AE/TO/1619/ 2024-25 Date: 19.09.2024		Rs. 99,32,491/- Rs. 1,98,700/-		
5		BWSSB/EES-1/AE/TO/1620/ 2024-25 Date: 19.09.2024		Rs. 51,83,861/- Rs. 1,03,700/-		
6		BWSSB/EES-1/AE/TO/1621/ 2024-25 Date: 19.09.2024		Rs. 71,34,738/- Rs. 1,42,700/-		
7		BWSSB/EES-1/AE/TO/1622/ 2024-25 Date: 19.09.2024		Rs. 99,63,302/- Rs. 1,99,300/-		
8		BWSSB/EES-1/AE/TO/1751/ 2024-25 Date: 23.09.2024		Rs. 88,62,990/- Rs. 1,77,700/-		

Sd/- Executive Engineer (South)-1.

Office of the Chief Engineer(Kaveri-Operation & Maintenance), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bengaluru - 560 009.

9	Kaveri (Operation & Maintenance -1)	BWSSB/EE(K-O&M)-1/AE/2024/ 04/1261/2024-25 Date: 20.09.2024		Rs. 16.84 Lakhs Rs. 42,500/-	22.10.2024 upto 4:00 p.m.	24.10.2024 after 4:01 p.m.

Sd/- Executive Engineer (Kaveri-Operation & Maintenance-1).

Office of the Chief Engineer(West), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bengaluru - 560 009.

10	West-2	BWSSB/EE(W-2)/PB/3304/ 2024-25 Date: 23.09.2024	1	Rs. 59,23,923/- Rs. 1,18,500/-	18.10.2024 upto 3:00 p.m.	19.10.2024 after 3:00 p.m.
11			2	Rs. 59,51,000/- Rs. 1,19,100/-		
12		BWSSB/EE(W-2)/PB/3304/ 2024-25 Date: 23.09.2024 (For SC Category)	3	Rs. 68,01,290/- Rs. 68,100/-		
13		BWSSB/EE(W-2)/PB/3306/ 2024-25 Date: 23.09.2024	1	Rs. 17,18,701/- Rs. 43,000/-	07.10.2024 upto 3:00 p.m.	08.10.2024 after 3:00 p.m.
14			2	Rs. 47,11,202/- Rs. 94,300/-		
15		BWSSB/EE(W-2)/PB/3306/ 2024-25 Date: 23.09.2024 (For ST Category)	3	Rs. 15,25,918/- Rs. 19,100/-		
16		BWSSB/EE(W-2)/PB/3306/ 2024-25 Date: 23.09.2024 (For SC Category)	4	Rs. 24,08,065/- Rs. 25,000/-		
17		BWSSB/EE(W-2)/PB/3306/ 2024-25 Date: 23.09.2024	5	Rs. 48,63,432/- Rs. 97,500/-		

Sd/- Executive Engineer (West)-2.

Office of the Chief Engineer(WWM-East), 5th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bengaluru - 560 009.

18	WWM-P K&T Valley	BWSSB/EE(WWM-P)K&T/AE/722/ 2024-25 Date: 23.09.2024	Rs. 20,44,013/- Rs. 40,880/-	03.10.2024 upto 4:00 p.m.	04.10.2024 at 4:05 p.m.

Sd/- Executive Engineer (WWM-P) K&T Valley

19	WWM-N K&T Valley	BWSSB/EW(N)KT/PB/1021/ 2024-25 Date: 25.09.2024	Rs. 29.13 Lakhs Rs. 0.59 Lakhs	03.10.2024 upto 4:00 p.m.	04.10.2024 at 4:30 p.m.

Sd/- Executive Engineer (WWM-N) K&T Valley

The details regarding the tender and participation in the e-procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/RA/2167/2024-25

धुळे महानगरपालिका, धुळे
बांधकाम विभाग–ई निविदा सुचना क्र. 86 सन 2024–25

मा. आयुक्त, धुळे महानगरपालिका, धुळे हे खालील कामाकरीता ई निविदा प्रणालीद्वारे (ऑनलाईन) महाराष्ट्र शासन सार्वजनिक बांधकाम विभाग यांचेकडील नोंदणीकृत ठेकेदार/ संस्था / व्यक्तीकडुन B_1 पध्दतीने Item Rate नुसार निविदा दर मागविण्यांत येत आहे.

अ. क्र.	कामाचे नाव	अंदाजपत्रकीय रक्कम	बयाणा रक्कम	निविदा संचाची फी
धुळे महानगरपालिका मनपा निधी अंतर्गत–(सन 2024–25) १ वर्ष मुदतीकरीता				
1)	घनकचरा व्यवस्थापन (वाहतूक व हाताळणी) अधिनियम 2016 नुसार 1 वर्षे कालावधीसाठी 1) घंटागाडीद्वारे धुळे शहरातील (१०१.०६ चौ.कि.मी.) वार्ड निहाय दैनंदिन घराघरातुन निर्माण होणाऱ्या कचऱ्याचे संकलन करणे वाहतूक करणे, वजन करणे उदा. तसेच रहिवासी क्षेत्र, उपहारगृह, दुकाने, व्यापारी संकुले, उद्याने इ. ठिकाणाचा घनकचरा (ओला व सुका) वेगवेगळा संकलन करून घनकचरा व्यवस्थापन प्रकल्पापर्यंत वजनानुसार वाहतुक करणे. 2) शहरतील रस्त्यावरील कचरा/माती, गटारीतील काढण्यात आलेला गाळ तसेच नाले सफाईतुन निघालेला गाळ कंपोस्ट डेपो (landfill) पर्यंत वाहतुक करणे. 3) शहरातील पेठ भागातील प्रमुख रस्ते तसेच मनपा प्रशासकीय इमारत साफसफाई करण्याकामी 60 मनुष्यबळ पुरवठा करणे 4) घनकचरा प्रकल्पावर तसेच कंपोस्ट डेपोवर जेसीबी, पोकलेंड, ट्रक्टर, डंपर मशिन पुरविणे. (ड्रायवर व डिझेल सह).	13,59,47,184	13,59,471	79,650

उपरोक्त निविदांबाबतचा सविस्तर तपशिल https://mahatenders.gov.in या संकेतस्थळावर दि. 27–09–2024, सायं. 17.05 वाजेपासुन पहावयास मिळेल.

सही/–
आयुक्त तथा प्रशासक
धुळे महानगरपालिका, धुळे

जा.क्र./धुमपा/ बां.वि./51/2024–25
दिनांक 25/09/2024

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDERS
(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

BWSSB invites tenders in two stage tender system from eligible contractors for the following works.

Sl. No.	Name of the Works	Amount put to Tender / EMD Amount
Office of the Chief Engineer (South), 7th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore - 560 009.		
IFT No.:BWSSB/EIC/CE(S)/ACE(S)-II/DCE(M)-I/TA(S)/4705/2024-25		**Date:24.09.2024**
1	Providing and laying of 100/150mm dia DI pipeline to replace 75/100mm dia corroded CI water pipeline at Cheluvadipalya DMA and surrounding area coming under JJR Service Station of AEE(SW-2) Sub Division.	Rs. 289.42 Lakhs / Rs. 4.34 Lakhs
IFT No.:BWSSB/EIC/CE(S)/ACE(S)-II/DCE(M)-I/TA(S)/4706/2024-25		**Date:24.09.2024**
2	Providing & laying 200,150 and 100mm dia DI WS feeder line and distribution line at BSK I stage 20th, 19th, 18th, 17th main and surrounding areas from Nagendra block OHT to Bank colony main road coming under Mountjhoy S/Stn of SW-3 Sub division.	Rs. 114.55 Lakhs / Rs. 1.72 Lakhs
IFT No.:BWSSB/EIC/CE(S)/ACE(S)-II/DCE(M)-I/TA(S)/4707/2024-25		**Date:24.09.2024**
3	Providing and laying of 100/150 dia DI to replace 75mm dia CI corroded pipeline at Sameerpura and surrounding area Coming under VV Puram Service Station of AEE (SW-2) Sub-Division.	Rs. 107.46 Lakhs / Rs. 1.61 Lakhs
IFT No.:BWSSB/EIC/CE(S)/ACE(S)-I/DCE(M)-I/TA(S)/4708/2024-25		**Date:24.09.2024**
4	Providing and laying of 300/230mm dia RCC/SW sewerline to improve sewerage facilities to Old Mangammanapalya cross roads, 5th cross to 10th cross Bandeapalya and surrounding areas coming under the jurisdiction of HSR layout service station of AEE(S)-1-2 Sub Division.	Rs. 142.29 Lakhs / Rs. 2.13 Lakhs
IFT No.:BWSSB/EIC/CE(S)/ACE(S)-I/DCE(M)-I/TA(S)/4709/2024-25		**Date:24.09.2024**
5	Replacement of old 100mm dia CI water supply lines with 100mm dia DI line at 7th sector HSR layout and surrounding areas coming under the jurisdiction of HSR layout service station of AEE(S)-1-2 Sub Division.	Rs. 344.03 Lakhs / Rs. 5.16 Lakhs
IFT No.:BWSSB/EIC/CE(S)/ACE(S)-I/DCE(M)-I/TA(S)/4710/2024-25		**Date:24.09.2024**
6	Replacement of Old 100/150/200/300mm dia CI water supply lines with DI line at 6th & 7th Sector, HSR layout and surrounding areas coming under the jurisdiction of HSR layout Service Station of AEE(S)-1-2 Sub Division.	Rs. 394.25 Lakhs / Rs. 5.91 Lakhs

For all the above works, Last date for receipt of tenders : **10.10.2024 upto 15:00 Hrs.**
The Tenders will be opened on: **14.10.2024 after 16.00 Hrs.**

Sd/-
Chief Engineer (South)

The details regarding the tender and participatin in the e-procurement process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/JA/2169/2024-25

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER (Only Through KPP Portal)

BWSSB invites Tenders in Two Cover System from Eligible contractors for the following works.

Office of the Chief Engineer (South), 7th Floor Cauvery Bhavana, KG Road, Bengaluru- 560 009.

Sl No.	Name of the Works	Amount put to Tender / EMD Amount
IFT No:BWSSB/EIC/CE(S)/ACE(S)-II/DCE(M)-1/TA(S)/4775/2024-25		**Date: 24.09.2024**
1.	Providing and Laying 230mm Dia SW Line 300mm Dia RCC Pipe line from 8th Main to 12th Main Poorna Pragna Layout near BMTC Depo surrounding area coming under PP Layout Service station of AEE(SW-5) Sub division.	₹ 165.63 Lakhs / ₹ 2.48 Lakhs
IFT No:BWSSB/EIC/CE(S)/ACE(S)-II/DCE(M)-1/TA(S)/4774/2024-25		**Date: 24.09.2024**
2.	Providing and Laying 600mm Dia MS Pipeline from Uttarahalli Circle to Vasanthapura Main Road along Subramanyapura Main Road, Uttarahalli Coming under PP Layout Service Station of AEE(SW-5) Sub Division.	₹ 194.55 Lakhs / ₹ 2.92 Lakhs
IFT No:BWSSB/EIC/CE(S)/ACE(S)-II/DCE(M)-1/TA(S)/4773/2024-25		**Date: 25.09.2024**
3.	Work of Upgradation of Water supply facility by providing and laying of 150mm/100mm dia DI water pipeline at Kavery Nagar Supply being feeding by Anand Timber Main feder line coming under Devagiri S/St of AEE(SW-4) Sub Division.	₹ 197.59 Lakhs / ₹ 2.96 Lakhs
IFT No:BWSSB/EIC/CE(S)/ACE(S)-II/DCE(M)-1/TA(S)/4772/2024-25		**Date: 25.09.2024**
4.	Providing and Laying 200, 150mm Dia DI Feeder main along with 100mm Dia distribution line in lieu of 150mm and 100mm CI line at 1st main to 7th main to improve the water supply to Srinivasanagar coming under Kathriguppe Service station of AEE(SW-4) Sub division.	₹ 299.17 Lakhs / ₹ 4.48 Lakhs
IFT No:BWSSB/EIC/CE(S)/ACE(S)-II/DCE(M)-1/TA(S)/4771/2024-25		**Date: 25.09.2024**
5.	Providing and Laying 300mm Dia RCC NP3 Class pipe line at Uttarahalli Main road from Rajathadri Palace to Shanimahathma Temple Chikkallasandra main road coming under PP Layout S/S of AEE(SW-5) Sub division.	₹ 206.74 Lakhs / ₹ 3.10 Lakhs
IFT No:BWSSB/EIC/CE(S)/ACE(S)-II/DCE(M)-1/TA(S)/4770/2024-25		**Date: 25.09.2024**
6.	Work of Upgradation of Water supply facility by providing and laying of 300/250/150/100mm dia DI water pipeline at Kavery Nagar Supply being fed by Banashankari GLR coming under Devagiri S/St of AEE(SW-4) Sub Division.	₹ 307.61 Lakhs / ₹ 4.61 Lakhs

For the all above works the last date and time for Receipt of completed tenders will be on **10.10.2024** upto **15:00** hrs. The Opening of tender on **14.10.2024** after **16:00** hrs.

Sd/-
Chief Engineer (South)

The details regarding participation in the e-procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the undersigned office during working hours.

DIPR/SI/2171/2024/25

City colleges see good placements with recruitment, salary packages going up

In addition to IT firms, service sector, marketing, finance, and banking industries emerge as leading recruiters this year

Jahnavi T.R.
BENGALURU

After experiencing significant volatility in the job market over the past few years, colleges in Bengaluru are now reporting their best placement season since the pandemic. With attractive salary packages and increased recruitment numbers, placement officers are seeing a positive shift.

Professional courses such as engineering and management, which saw a slight dip in placements due to the global economic slowdown, are now seeing a resurgence.

This year, the job market outlook seems to have improved.

Engineering colleges have observed a rise in demand for core branches like civil, electrical, and mechanical engineering. FILE PHOTO

Highest package

"In the past two years, the European and U.S. markets were sluggish, impacting placements. However, this year, we've already completed 65% of our placements within a few weeks. The highest package so far is ₹57 lakh per annum," said Ashwath, Principal of Bangalore Institute of Technology.

Engineering colleges have observed a rise in demand for core branches like civil, electrical, and mechanical engineering. "While IT placements have always led the way, this year companies recruiting from core engineering branches have arrived earlier than usual. The semiconductor industry is also gaining traction," said K.S. Sridhar, Dean of Placements at PES University.

Sridhar added that over 350 students have been placed in 44 companies, with the highest salary package reaching ₹45 lakh per annum. "Last year, there was uncertainty due to industries being unsure of project stability. This year, however, the trends are encouraging, with a surge of companies on campus," he noted.

Salary increments

Undergraduate and postgraduate colleges are also seeing positive results. "This year, over 100 companies are visiting our campus. There's been a noticeable increase in salary packages. The average package for UG students ranges from ₹3.5 to ₹4 lakh per annum, while PG students are averaging around ₹8 lakh per annum," said Augustine George, Principal of Kristu Jayanti College, Autonomous.

He added that companies are ensuring early salary increments, even if the initial packages are lower than expected.

In addition to IT firms, the service sector, marketing, finance, and banking industries have emerged as leading recruiters this year. Students are expressing optimism about the placement trends. "We were concerned after seeing seniors struggle in previous years, but most of my classmates have received decent offers, and a majority have already been recruited," said Pavana G., a student at a top engineering college.

Placement officers across the city report a 5-10% increase in recruitment numbers compared to previous years. "Recruitment has definitely increased, and we are expecting slightly higher salary packages than last year. It looks like a promising placement season ahead," said Fouzia Khanum, Placement Officer at Jyoti Nivas College, Autonomous.

Leopard rescued at Electronics City; shifted to Mysuru

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The leopard that was rescued. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

After a week-long round-the-clock operation, the Forest Department officials on Wednesday rescued the leopard, which was spotted in Electronic City in Bengaluru, on September 17.

The leopard, aged around five years, was spotted crossing a flyover near a toll plaza in Electronics City at 3 a.m. on Tuesday. Its movements were captured on CCTV at the Phase 1 toll plaza. The big cat was observed moving from the Panak India Company area to the Nettur Technical Training Foundation (NTTF) ground.

The leopard has been shifted to Mysuru by the Forest Department officials, and they are now awaiting further orders on where the animal has to be relocated.

As the leopard has strayed into the urban landscape once, relocating to a nearby forest area may not help. The animal may again stray into urban pockets in search of easy prey like dogs.

"Panic had gripped the residents and employees of tech firms, and it was a big challenge for the Forest Department to ensure safety and awareness among them," Assistant Conservator of Forest Ganesh V. Thadagani, who headed the operation, said.

"A team of officials deployed at strategic locations used a thermal drone to track the cat," according to the official. A cage measuring 10-by-12 feet was placed with bait, and the leopard, which was taking shelter on the ITI campus spread across 30 acres, was spotted and was then surrounded by the team. "The area was not maintained, and bushes and trees helped the animal to hide," the official said.

He further said of the 10,000 leopards in India, more than 50% stray into urban or fringe areas for easy prey. It is usual behaviour with this animal.

From Page One

Mahalakshmi murder case suspect ends life

The police, who were on the trail of the suspect, had sent a team to Odisha to track him down. However, Roy stayed at home at Bhuinpur in Bhadrak district till Tuesday night, stating that he had come on emergency work. He left on his scooter, and later, his body was found in a graveyard around 1.5 km away from his village. Dhusuri police personnel ascertained his identity based on the bike registration and other belongings and alerted the Bengaluru police.

A team of Bengaluru city police, led by an inspector, reached Bhadrak on Wednesday. The Bengaluru team was suspecting him to be either in Bhadrak or Balasore. They were zeroing in on him, and before they could reach him, Roy died by suicide, said Bhadrak police.

Though the police had questioned three other male friends of Mahalakshmi, they soon zeroed in on Roy, as he was also missing almost from the day of the murder.

He worked at a cloth shop

Roy worked at a cloth shop at Malleshwaram where Mahalaskhmi was also working earlier. Mahalakshmi later shifted to working at a shop at a mall. He used to pick up and drop her to work at the mall. The police soon tracked down his younger brother to Hebbagodi, who said his sibling confessed to the crime with him before fleeing the city. He used to fight with Mahalakshmi after realising that she had many male friends, but Mahalakshmi started ignoring him. Jealousy led him to commit the gruesome murder, the police said.

(Those in distress or those having suicidal tendencies can call Arogya Sahayavani 104 for help.)

INBRIEF

St. Joseph's varsity to hold first convocation in city today

St. Joseph's University, Bengaluru, will host its first convocation on Thursday. It will be held on the campus on Lalbagh Road at 10 a.m. As many as 693 students will receive their degrees and 23 will receive silver medals. Jairam Ramesh, MP, will deliver the convocation address.

E-paper edition

The Hindu offers more coverage of Bengaluru in the e-paper edition. (epaper.thehindu.com)

In the issue dated September 26, we feature a story on the legendary Cothas Coffee, celebrating 75 years in the industry. As the company enters the next leg of its journey, the brand that has become a household name by now seems to be gearing up to take its ambitions beyond the seas.

Text & Context and Science

Weekday features on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) carries explainers, special articles and quizzes. In the latest issue (September 26, Thursday), the following articles are available:

- Could global warming impede weather and climate forecasting? **newsth.live/globalwarmingexp**
- What the dismissal of Gino defamation lawsuit means for science **newsth.live/ginosuit**

You can use your smartphone's inbuilt features to access these articles. If it's an Android phone, use Google Lens to read and tap the url to access an article. If it's an iPhone, use Live Text on camera to do the same.

Power supply disruption

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

There will be a disruption in the power supply on Thursday from 10.30 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the areas serviced from 66/11kV Yellar Bande MUSS for carrying out maintenance work.

The areas are: A.K. Ashram Road, Devegowda Road, R.T. Nagar I Block, Thimmaiah Garden, Modi Garden, Veerannapalya, Lumbini Garden, Mariyannapalya, Coffee Board Layout, Kempapura, Dasarahalli, Buvaneshwari Nagar, Chanakya Layout, Nagawara, Thanisandra Main Road, Ashirwad Nagar, Amarjyothi Layout, Rachenahalli road, Mastry Palya, Srirampura Village, VHBCS layout, Govindpura.

BEL, ARIES join hands to ensure satellite safety

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Defence PSU Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) and Aryabhatta Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES), Nainital, have signed an MoU to collaborate on space technologies, particularly focusing on Space Situational Awareness (SSA).

Image processing techniques, software for data analytics solutions, as well as instruments and laboratories, will soon be developed for tracking space objects, especially near-earth objects and artificial satellites, to ensure the safety of satellites and their users. Such a practice of tracking is called SSA.

SSA is required for predicting, warning and avoiding any potential collisions between objects in space.

As part of the MoU, ARIES and BEL will utilise observations from ARIES's state-of-the-art telescopes, such as the 4m International Liquid Mirror Telescope (ILMT), for this purpose. The two organisations will jointly develop image processing techniques and software for data analytics solutions. They will also collaborate on the development of instruments and laboratories.

Medicover Hospitals unveils latest facility

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Medicover Hospitals, a healthcare service provider, on Wednesday, unveiled its latest integrated healthcare facility in Bengaluru. With an investment of ₹120 crores, this 300-bed, modern hospital is poised to revolutionise healthcare in the State.

The hospital will provide comprehensive healthcare services, with specialised departments for Cardiac Sciences, Orthopaedics, Neurosciences, Organ transplant, Nephrology, and Gastro Sciences. The facility will also have advanced diagnostic facilities, including a Cath Lab, 3T MRI, CT scan, and digital X-ray.

Speaking after inaugurating the hospital, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar said, "With presence in Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh, the Medicover chain of hospitals is changing the healthcare industry in South India. The government stands with you in whatever you want to do in the healthcare industry in the State, he said.

Ministers Satish Jarkiholi, Dinesh Gundu Rao, former CM Basavaraj Bommai and MLAs Manjula Aravind Limbavalli and N.A. Harris were present.

Commenting on the launch, Anil Krishna, Chairman and Managing Director of Medicover Group of Hospitals, said, "For Medicover Hospitals, venturing into Bengaluru has long been a cherished ambition, aimed at delivering high-quality healthcare at accessible costs to the community."

292 students awarded degrees at 28th convocation of Ramaiah Institute of Management

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

"We are facing challenges bigger than ever before, entering a world of Artificial Intelligence (AI), space dominance, and bio-hacking. However, these challenges also present opportunities for you to shape the future in ways previous generations never imagined," said Aprameya Radhakrishna, Founder and CEO of TaxiForSure and Koo, while addressing the 28th Convocation of Ramaiah Institute of Management (RIM) on Wednesday.

"Starting with nothing gives you the freedom to take risks, experiment, fail, and try again," he remarked.

'Success a checkpoint'

"Success is not a destination but a checkpoint along a longer journey. The real magic lies in how you evolve after reaching each milestone. This mindset drove me to co-found Koo in 2020 after selling TaxiForSure to Ola in 2016 for ₹2,000 crore."

A total of 292 students were awarded degrees at the ceremony. Parswanath H.V., Chief Executive of Engineering and General Sciences at Gokula Education Foundation, and Karisiddappa, Chief Academic Advisor, were also present at the event.

What the dismissal of the Gino suit for defamation means to science

The case made academics, administrators, and universities recalibrate the implications of scientific misconduct. More importantly, the dismissal of the defamation claims against the independent researchers verifying scientific findings has fortified trust in science as a community enterprise

Abhishek Vajjala
Hansika Kapoor

Francesca Gino delivering a talk in a January 2013 video. YOUTUBE

Francesca Gino's reputation precedes her in the behavioural science community. Once touted as an expert on dishonesty and negotiation, she has been at the centre of an academic misconduct scandal for the past few years.

In a nutshell, independent researchers Leif Nelson, Joe Simmons, and Uri Simonsohn identified inconsistencies and data manipulation associated with at least four scientific papers co-authored by Prof. Gino. They detailed their findings in a series of posts on their blog 'Data Colada.' When these posts were published, Prof. Gino's now-former employer, Harvard University, placed her on unpaid leave and launched proceedings to revoke her tenured position.

Prof. Gino filed a $25 million defamation lawsuit against both Harvard University and the 'Data Colada' authors in late 2023. She maintained – and continues to maintain – her innocence. She has said in her defence that research assistants or an unknown third party who had access to her research data made mistakes for which she couldn't be blamed. But while it continues to be plausible that 'Data Colada' unearthed honest mistakes rather than misconduct in Prof. Gino's papers, the buck also stops with her.

But then last week, U.S. District Court (for Massachusetts) Judge Myong Joun dismissed Prof. Gino's defamation case against the 'Data Colada' researchers and partially dismissed her case against Harvard University. The judge ruled that Prof. Gino could continue her case against the university on the grounds that it breached her employment contract by launching the tenure revocation proceedings.

The verdict and scientists

Since the court has only partly dismissed Prof. Gino's claims against Harvard Business School – the ones on procedural irregularities have been permitted to continue to an eventual trial – it appears that even notable institutions do not have the most legally robust policies in dealing with research misconduct.

The verdict is a good opportunity to take a much-needed and closer look at such policies since they present several reputational harms for science at large, and not just to researchers and institutions. Well-designed research misconduct policies can ensure unethical activities are kept in check and that the institute will follow due process. Additionally, policies governing research, particularly the production of research, can either create environments that incentivise or dissuade individual researchers from engaging in research misconduct.

While each of the individual policies is enacted for a specific purpose, collectively they can influence the prevalence of and the institute's ability to act against unethical research practices. Policies against misconduct and those that pressurise researchers to publish, can work against each other, yet strong policies to check misconduct must exist. For example, some have blamed the conflict between Italy's guidelines on research misconduct and its numerical thresholds for scholars to be promoted at universities for the rise in citation-doping (increasing the number of citations a paper has by unethical means) in the country.

"WEIRD" countries (short for Western, educated, industrialised, rich, democratic) have made much progress on policing research. One recent study of select European Union countries found four regulatory bodies per country on average dedicated to research integrity and ethics. While not without shortcomings, the non-obligatory requirements for research integrity and ethics training and lack of specific legal protections for whistleblowers are notable.

Progress elsewhere has been mixed, however. China and India have high research output but at the same time visibly high rates of retractions; have taken notice of the problem of research misconduct; and are making efforts to address it. Chinese authorities audited retractions this year, requiring universities to submit a list of papers that were retracted and for what reasons. In India, the University Grants Commission revoked the mandate for PhD scholars to have published papers in journals in order to graduate, reducing some of the pressure.

This said, reactionary audits and relaxing publishing requirements are not policies, nor do they constitute substantive reform. In fact, for all their willingness to audit, China's extant policies governing research production and the way bureaucrats are executing them could be fuelling research misconduct in academia.

Likewise, despite India's impressive strides in climbing up the research leaderboard, the country still lacks a comprehensive national policy on research misconduct as well as any sort of body dedicated to keeping an eye out for research misconduct. The recently established Anusandhan National Research Foundation is close to being a regulatory body, but India needs something more like the U.S. Office of Research Integrity.

Gino filed a $25 million defamation lawsuit against both Harvard University and the 'Data Colada' authors in late 2023.

When governance and responsibility over research are left largely to the discretion of institutes, policies can be dictated by shortsighted self-interest and with outcomes more detrimental than just research misconduct. In the end, every sufficiently large gathering or grouping of individuals required rules and supervision: society needs governments and laws, markets need watchdogs and regulations, and events need organisers and protocol. Similarly, scientists need bodies to implement ethical research and policies to encourage it.

The verdict and investigators

The verdict is also a significant win for independent, responsible research activists. One of Robert K. Merton's norms applies here: scientific claims must be scrutinised thoroughly before being accepted. 'Data Colada' also applied the Mertonian norm of disinterestedness: that science should be carried out for its own sake when investigating an alleged fraud.

In fact, the researchers' blog posts went a step further and generously hedged their language (e.g., "The posted data **seem to be** sorted by two columns"). This sort of writing is second nature to academics because those involved in producing knowledge realise that the universe is complex and certainty is an illusion. Researchers often use 'may', 'appears', 'seemingly', 'suggests', etc., because we're (usually) honest about what we don't know as well as the limited generalisability of what we've found, especially in the behavioural sciences. This idiosyncratic writing style protected 'Data Colada' because its statements expressed subjective views, not hard facts.

Let's also remember the context of these proceedings: in the U.S., the First Amendment protects freedom of speech and has a well-developed and reasonably independent legal system that allows one to defend oneself.

The verdict and Prof. Gino

As for Prof. Gino, it's hard to say at this time what the implications of this verdict will be.

Her lawyers have already put a positive spin on the partial dismissal, focussing on the judge's decision to allow the breach of contract case against Harvard University to continue. However, do academics with well-built public profiles really face any threats to their reputation or future career prospects?

The Gino case certainly made academics, administrators, and university officials recalibrate the implications of scientific misconduct, especially when it's caught out. More importantly, the court's decision to dismiss the defamation claims against the independent researchers verifying scientific findings has fortified trust in science as a community enterprise.

(Abhishek Vajjala is a research assistant at the Department of Economics, av@monkprayogshala.in. Hansika Kapoor is a research author at the Department of Psychology – both at Monk Prayogshala, Mumbai. hk@monkprayogshala.in)

World Bank president Ajay Banga views the impact of sea level rise in Funafuti, Tuval. REUTERS

Leaders at UN urge world's wealthiest to do more on climate

Reuters

Developing nations on September 23 pleaded at the U.N. General Assembly for the world's richest to do more to help them cope with the hardships they face from climate extremes.

Leaders of small island states most at risk from rising sea levels said it was time for those countries that burn most of the fossil fuels blamed for rising temperatures to stop paying "lip service" to the issue.

"I wonder if our countries are moving further and further away from the unity and the moral fortitude we require to protect our people," said Samoan Natural Resources and Environment Minister Cedric Schuster, who chairs the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

The island nations of AOSIS have gained a powerful voice in global climate talks. During a news conference on Monday, Schuster called out the world's biggest economies in the Group of 20, which together account for more than 80% of global greenhouse gas emissions.

"We need all countries, but particularly the G20, to lead the way" on emissions cuts and climate finance, Schuster told reporters. "The vulnerable people of our world are drained by lip service."

Delivering a similar message on behalf of the Least Developed Country negotiating bloc, Malawi's climate and natural resources minister, Yusuf Mkungula, said: "Industrialised countries must lead the way."

The pleas underscore the widening disparity between the nations

Scientists say that at least six of the planet's natural systems are damaged, with the ocean's chemistry also threatened by acidification, which occurs as it absorbs carbon dioxide from air

contributing most to global warming and those suffering its worst effects, demonstrating how climate change has become not just an environmental issue but a matter of global justice.

Some country leaders spoke during a special U.N. 'Summit for the Future,' while others addressed reporters and panels at one of the 900 or so climate-themed events being held this week across New York City.

Separately, scientists at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research warned that humanity has now damaged at least six of the planet's natural systems, including the climate equilibrium, with a seventh – the ocean's chemistry – now threatened by acidification, which occurs as the ocean absorbs carbon dioxide from the air.

"Climate events are coming at us faster and more frequently," said Bahamas Prime Minister Phillip Davis, adding that he was pleading with wealthy nations to "stay focused" on the problem.

So far, he said, "the signals being sent [by countries] do not match the commitments that were made."

Earlier on Monday, executives from major companies, including massive energy-user Amazon.com and power producers like Vestas and Iberdrola, urged world leaders to follow through on an agreement made at last year's COP28 summit to triple renewable-energy capacity by 2030.

Elsewhere, 50 U.S. banks announced plans to cooperate on accelerating investment in clean energy, while a separate group of 14 banks, including Citi and Bank of America, called for a tripling of nuclear energy capacity globally.

THE SCIENCE QUIZ

The pursuit of semiconductor infallibility

Siva Shakthi A.

Please send in your answers to science@thehindu.co.in

QUESTION 1
Cubic boron arsenide is an _____ semiconductor, meaning it can efficiently transport both electrons and holes. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 2
Graphene lacks a critical property called a natural _____. This lacuna poses a significant challenge to its use as a traditional semiconductor despite its excellent electrical conductivity, high thermal conductivity, flexibility, and mechanical strength. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 3
$Re_6Se_8Cl_2$ is a recently discovered _____ quantum material that allows particles called excitons to travel with minimal scattering and at 100- to 1,000-times faster than the speed of electrons in silicon, even at room temperature. This is a result of its crystal structure, which makes the material a potential candidate for robust semiconductors. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 4
In this technique, thin films of semiconductor material are deposited on a surface by having its elemental constituents vaporise in a vacuum. It allows engineers to precisely control the thickness and composition of each layer of the semiconductor. Name this technique, commonly used to fabricate advanced electronic and optoelectronic devices.

QUESTION 5
In the early 1940s, researchers at Bell Labs introduced impurities in silicon and germanium to alter and study their electrical properties. These experiments led to the invention of X in 1947, boosting semiconductor technology and eventually winning its inventors a Nobel Prize in 1956. Name X.

Answers to September 24 quiz:
1. Term that reveals details of a rock's composition, depositional environment – **Ans: Facie**
2. Archaeological technique used to make subsurface features – **Ans: Ground-penetrating radar**
3. Techniques to age artefacts – **Ans: Relative and absolute dating**
4. Technique based on electrical currents' interaction with subsurface matter – **Ans: Electrical resistivity tomography**
5. Tech that allows researchers to extract and study old DNA – **Ans: Ancient DNA**
Visual: **Niels Stensen**
First contact: Seema Das | Anmol Agrawal | K.N. Viswanathan | Dalbeer Singh Pharswan | Sidharth M.

Visual: Name this German physicist who, in 1874, discovered that in galena, a primary ore of lead, electric current flowed freely in only one direction. His discovery found practical application in the first crystal radio sets in the 1900s. PUBLIC DOMAIN

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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

India's foodgrain production in the 2023-24 crop year

332.22 In million tonnes. The final estimate for 2023-24 shows an increase of 2.61 million tonnes from last year's 329.6 million tonnes. Pulses and oilseed production fell compared to last year. PTI

The marginal increase in India's coal imports, as per official reports

0.9 In per cent. According to an official statement, coal imports during the April-July period of FY25 reported a marginal increase reaching 90.51 million tonnes (MT) compared to 89.68 MT in the previous year. PTI

India's overseas inflow in the last decade, from 2014 to 2024

667.4 In billion dollars. According to the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), overseas inflows of FDI increased compared to the 304.1 billion recorded between 2004-2014. PTI

Diamond polishing industry revenue hits decadal low

12 In billion dollars. According to research firm Crisil Ratings, the decline can be attributed to the muted demand in key export markets of the U.S. and China, a fall in prices due to oversupply and a shift towards lab-grown diamonds. PTI

The number of structures razed in U.P.'s Bahraich

23 Bulldozers razed residential structures in Kaiserganj. The demolition was ordered by the High Court. Locals claimed that several of the structures were built under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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How global warming affects forecasting

Existing models cannot reproduce monsoon trends in the past half century and are considered unreliable for the future. Meteorologists will need to figure out if the predictability of natural modes such as hurricanes, El Niño, La Niña, and the Indian Ocean Dipole will decrease as the warming is relentless, if not accelerating

FULL CONTEXT

Raghu Murtugudde

With the record warming of 2023-2024, we are getting a clearer picture of what global warming does. The medley of extremes strewn across the planet has covered the gamut from deadly heatwaves to devastating cyclones and floods, from droughts to wildfires.

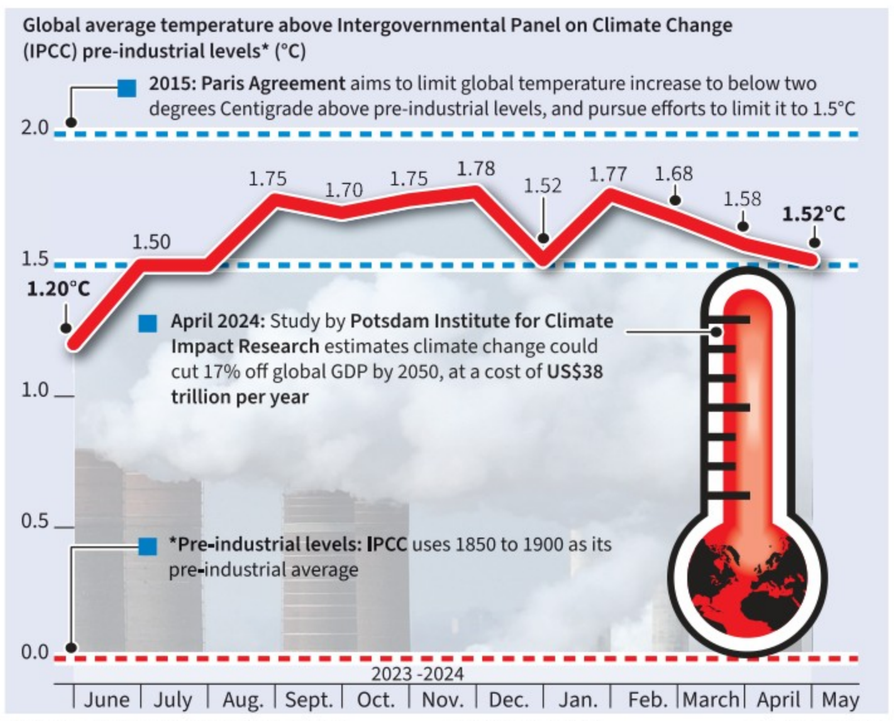
According to some estimates, the world has already crossed the 1.5° C warming threshold (that is, the earth's average surface temperature has increased by more than 1.5° C over the pre-industrial average). The caveat is that global temperatures are an estimate produced from a combination of data and climate models. As the 1.5°C limit is part of a demand by the Alliance of Small Island Developing States, scientists have built models to predict what environmental disturbances crossing this threshold could invite. However, and more importantly, it is not yet clear how long the warming has to remain above the threshold for the projected impacts to materialise.

The spectacular show that nature has put up during 2023-2024 is also a stark reminder that we are far from able to predict the weather and the climate with the requisite skills and spatial-temporal scales to manage disasters effectively. The loss of lives, property, and infrastructure continue to traumatise humanity, especially the poor, who remain very vulnerable to extreme events.

Blazing heat: Residents collect drinking water from a tanker amid a water crisis in Delhi, on a hot summer day in New Delhi on June 6. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Global warming

The global average temperature for the last year was the highest ever documented, at 1.63°C above pre-industrial levels, according to the EU's Copernicus Climate Change Service



Source: Copernicus, Potsdam Institute, Reuters Picture: Getty Images © GRAPHIC NEWS

2024 versus our predictions

Meteorologists predicted the 2023 El Niño as early as in the spring of that year, which is remarkable. But the level of warming during 2023-2024 has caught them, and the public, by surprise because it was much higher than expected from the addition of the so-called mini-global warming by the El Niño to the ongoing background warming. We speculate that water vapour thrown up by the underwater volcano Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai during 2022 and CO2 emitted by the wildfires exacerbated the warming.

The 2023 monsoon was deficit but it did not qualify as an El Niño drought, the reasons for which researchers are yet to diagnose. Predictions from nearly all major weather centres earlier promised a strong La Niña in late 2024. Now this seems less likely. Perhaps nature has another googly in waiting. Similarly, weather forecasts have called for the most intense hurricane season in decades but this has yet to step beyond the normal.

The monsoon season has evolved erratically and has once again left many parts of India dry while producing devastating floods and landslides in many others. Now 2024 is set to emerge as a monsoon-surplus year; yet it can hardly be called a typical La Niña monsoon.

The cyclone season in the North Indian Ocean has also been weaker than what one would expect from a La Niña year. While some weather centres were very gung-ho about an Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) emerging in the Indian Ocean, it has played truant so far.

To be clear: this is not a litany of grievances against predictions. It is an expression of caution: that we will be remiss if we don't learn all the lessons from this extraordinary period of warming vis-à-vis their implications for the future of predictions and for the climate projections we keep producing.

Predictions may pose challenges

A quote often attributed to physicist Niels Bohr is apt here: prediction is difficult, especially if it's about the future. Weather and climate predictions frequently remind us of this. We do learn our lessons and continue to improve the models and the observational networks we need to produce better predictions.

But what if predictions continue to become more difficult with global warming? Put another way, are all the misfires we have had this year just a coincidence or are they a portent of what is to come?

Many studies have reported the impacts of warming on hurricanes, monsoons, El Niños, La Niñas, the IOD, etc. But the bigger question is: if the world is already warmer than 1.5° C, are there any conclusions we can draw about how all these natural variabilities have responded thus far?

Unfortunately, the period of warming we have experienced of late hasn't been long enough for us to confidently say what changes we can already detect in the dominant climate modes. The models are amazing in their ability to reproduce all natural modes given just the energy coming from the Sun at the top of the atmosphere. But they are not perfect: model answers often disagree; even the same model can produce different answers depending on its configuration.

For example, existing models cannot reproduce monsoon trends in the past half century and are considered unreliable for the future – they can only make skillful forecasts for the present. We have also not sorted out yet whether monsoon patterns are variable from decade to decade – patterns that we may currently be calling trends. We also don't know whether climate change can extend the timescale of natural decadal variability and make it a real trend. We need to address these critical questions to advance our understanding of processes and to make better predictions.

Predicting the future of predictions

There is plenty of hope for the future of predictions, but as the adage goes, hope is not a strategy. We have our work cut out for us. We obviously need to continue to improve our models and build on the fact that models are already capable of amazing feats, with some deficiencies. We need to figure out if the predictability of natural modes such as hurricanes, El Niño, La Niña, IOD, etc. will decrease as the warming is relentless, if not accelerating. Well-trained and enthusiastic scientists toil to improve models and data networks and bring the latest technologies, including artificial intelligence, machine learning, and sensor-fit drones, to bear on this pressing challenge.

We have plenty of reasons for optimism vis-à-vis reliable and actionable early warnings at the hyperlocal scale.

Lessons from 2023

We currently make climate projections using the same or similar models that project future climate based on how the concentrations of specific emissions increase, how populations grow, and what mitigation policies we implement, among other factors. For the coming decade or two, projection uncertainties depend on the model uncertainties themselves plus natural variabilities in a warming world.

The uncertainties in projections beyond a couple of decades are related entirely to the imagined scenarios that drive model simulations.

The inability to capture the response of natural modes to warming will continue to haunt all projections. It will be necessary to translate improved weather and climate predictions to improve the models.

The best strategy to ensure projections are reliable may be to restrict ourselves to just a decade or two into the future. The ongoing geopolitical perturbations and their cascades into markets, economies, and societies underscore the difficulty of imagining the future beyond a decade or so as well.

Overall, it is critical that we assess the costs and benefits of the considerable human, financial, and computational resources for climate projections out to 2100.

Raghu Murtugudde is professor, IIT Bombay, and emeritus professor, University of Maryland.

THE GIST

- Meteorologists predicted the 2023 El Niño as early as in the spring of that year, which is remarkable. But the level of warming during 2023-2024 has caught them, and the public, by surprise because it was much higher than expected from the addition of the so-called mini-global warming by the El Niño to the ongoing background warming.
- According to some estimates, the world has already crossed the 1.5° C warming threshold (that is, the earth's average surface temperature has increased by more than 1.5° C over the pre-industrial average).
- For the coming decade or two, projection uncertainties depend on the model uncertainties themselves plus natural variabilities in a warming world.

City cab drivers use messaging platforms to get rides, bypassing popular app-based aggregators

The 'duty groups' have gained popularity as drivers look to avoid the high commissions charged by ride-hailing companies

Darshan Devaiah B.P.
BENGALURU

Cab drivers in Bengaluru are increasingly moving away from traditional app-based platforms, choosing instead to connect with passengers through alternative channels like Telegram and WhatsApp. These apps have become hubs for "duty groups," where drivers and passengers communicate directly, bypassing the ride-hailing firms.

While drivers avoid the steep commissions deducted by aggregators, passengers have to pay only government-regulated fares. FILE PHOTO

Types of 'duty groups'
The shift to these informal platforms has been quietly growing, with some of these groups operating for two to three years. There are two main types of duty groups. The first consists of only drivers who share booking details with one another. If a driver is unable to fulfil a request due to location or availability issues, they pass it on to another driver in the group. The second type includes not only drivers but also passengers, travel agents, and representatives from tech parks and companies.

Members of these groups say the primary aim is to streamline transportation for employees, particularly after office hours. Drivers also invite regular customers to join the groups, creating a direct channel for repeat bookings.

Advantages
This model works well for drivers and passengers. Drivers avoid the steep commissions deducted by aggregators, increasing their take-home earnings, while passengers have to pay only government-regulated fares without the surge pricing or additional fees often imposed by ride-hailing apps.

Chandru K., a cab driver from Koramangala, explained: "When a passenger needs a cab, they post their request in the group. The drivers or admins respond with the driver's name, vehicle details, and phone number. Most bookings are for employee transport or airport trips, though there are some outstation trips as well."

The Karnataka Chalakara Okkoota, an association representing the State's cab drivers, has been running such duty groups on Telegram and WhatsApp for over a year. G. Narayanaswamy, president of the Okkoota, said, "The high commissions charged by ride-hailing apps severely cut into drivers' earnings. Our duty groups allow drivers to operate commission-free while adhering to government-fixed fares."

Safety concerns
While many passengers are happy with the lower fares, some are worried about safety. Responding to the concerns, Narayanaswamy said, "We use the mParivahan app, launched by the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, to verify drivers' credentials. If a vehicle's insurance or fitness certificate has expired, we immediately remove the driver from the group."

He said most group admins meticulously check documentation, including registration certificates, taxi permits, and insurance details. They also verify any outstanding traffic violations using mParivahan to ensure passengers are matched with reliable drivers.

Passengers who have switched to the alternative system have had mostly positive experiences. Krishna M. Rao, a tech professional commuting from Hulimavu to Electronic City, has been using a Telegram-based duty group for over six months.

"Initially, I had concerns about safety, but the driver I booked sent me all his credentials before the trip. It's been smooth sailing since then, though there have been a few times when I didn't get a response on time and had to fall back on the app-based aggregators."

Another passenger, Shivaputra Haldipur, who frequently travels between Bengaluru and Mysuru for business, praised the group-based system for its transparency. "I used to rely on apps, but the outstation fares were often exorbitant. Now, I book directly through a WhatsApp group, and the fare is always aligned with government regulations. The drivers have been professional, and I haven't encountered any issues so far."

Residents disappointed as parks in city ignore BBMP order on extended timings

Shreyas H.S.
BENGALURU

A senior BBMP official says the civic body is working to ensure compliance with the new timings. FILE PHOTO

Despite the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike mandating that parks be open from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m., several green spaces across the city have failed to adhere to these timings, frustrating many residents.

In June, Deputy Chief Minister and Bengaluru Development Minister D. K. Shivakumar announced that parks would remain open throughout the day, following public demand. This move aimed to provide a space for labourers and gig workers to rest during their work breaks.

However, citizens are now complaining that the civic body's orders are not being enforced. In some instances, Residents' Welfare Associations (RWAs), which have taken on park maintenance responsibilities, are restricting access, inconveniencing the general public.

Rohini Mohan shared her frustration on X (formerly Twitter), writing, "Madhavan Park is closed at 10.40 am. Why? What happened to the BBMP's promise of keeping parks open all day? My elderly mother wanted to walk, but the security guard refused to let her in."

Another user, Raja, posted on X, "In June, the Karnataka government made this announcement, but Yediyur Park still follows the old timings. A security guard told me the new proposal was cancelled."

Kiran Kumar, a resident of Banashankari, told *The Hindu* that the park in his area opens at 5 a.m. but closes by 10.30 a.m., reopening only at 3 p.m. and closing again at 8 p.m. He blamed RWAs and park adopters for the issue. "This select group is controlling public spaces. While the adoption policy has benefits, it has also become a problem for some parks," he said.

A senior BBMP official stated that the civic body is working to ensure compliance with the new timings.

"There may be parks not following the order. Citizens can report such issues by calling our helpline numbers, 22660000 or 22221188, or by providing information via WhatsApp at 9480685700."

3D mural display at 20 locations to highlight unhealthy habits

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

To mark World Heart Day, Manipal Hospital has launched a 3D mural art project in Bengaluru.

The unique artwork, which only reveals its full image when viewed from a distance, features a vibrant red heart symbolising the fight against unhealthy habits like smoking, alcohol addiction and obesity.

The heart-shaped mural has been created in association with Bengaluru Traffic Police and Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited.

The murals aim to ignite discussions on health and lifestyle choices, encouraging the public to reflect on personal habits they need to "unchain" from for better heart health and overall well-being.

"The heart mural, bound by chains, represents harmful habits that weigh people down. The community is urged to break free from these chains—whether it's smoking, poor diet, or addiction—and take steps toward healthier living. This is the heart of the message that Manipal Hospital seeks to convey through the artwork, " said a statement from the hospital.

This initiative is led by artists Baadal Nanjundaswamy, known for his spot art installations, and Mukesh Kumar, a 3D art specialist from Haryana.

The murals are being displayed at over 20 key locations across the city.

Case against man impersonating a Lokayukta officer to extort money from govt. officials

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Based on a complaint, the police charged the accused with impersonation and extortion under Bhartiya Nyay Sanhita, 2023

The Vidhana Soudha police on Wednesday registered a case against an unidentified person who, posing as a Lokayukta officer, was threatening government officials with cases trying to extort money from them.

Charge under BNS
Based on a complaint filed by Mallikarjuna C.S., Superintendent at Lokayukta office, the police charged the accused with impersonation and extortion under Bhartiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS), 2023.

Efforts are on to track down the accused, the police said.

The incident came to light when head constable Nayaz, who is handling the Lokayukta helpline, received a call from an officer from the Udupi taluk office on September 6, seeking information about an officer by the name of 'Phanindra'.

The officer informed the helpline that Phanindra made a call to him informing him that a case under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, had been filed against him and demanded ₹1 lakh to drop the charges.

Initially, the officer ignored but later, unable to bear harassment from the frequent calls, he approached the Lokayukta helpline to raise the complaint.

Verified on truecaller
The officials verified the mobile number on the Truecaller mobile application, where the number was shown as T. K. N. Phanindra, Karnataka Lokayukta.

The officials further verified and complained that the accused was making threatening calls to other government officials trying to extort money.

Such incidents, according to Mr. Mallikarjuna, would tarnish the image of the institution and he demanded strict action against the accused. The police are yet to make any arrests in this regard.

Bitcoin scam: Karnataka High Court denies bail to police officer

FROM THE COURT

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka has refused to grant anticipatory bail to Sridhar K. Pujar, a Deputy Superintendent of Police (Internal Security), who had allegedly intimidated hacker Shri Krishna alias Shriki, the main accused in the Bitcoin scam, and got the passwords of laptop, Bitcoin valet, etc., when he was investigating officer of the case initially.

Justice M.G. Uma passed the order while dismissing the petition filed by Mr. Pujar, seeking anticipatory bail as he has now been arraigned as an accused in the case by the investigating team.

The court also noted that the petitioner had been accused of not taking the signature of the mahazar witnesses while seizing the laptops and other gadgets from Shriki during the early stage of the investigation and not following several other procedures to be followed while seizing the gadgets.

Meanwhile, the court noted that the petitioner-police officer, with another accused police officer, who was head of the Technical Support Centre of the Bengaluru city Central Crime Branch, had tampered with the seized gadgets with illegal motives.

"The allegations made against the petitioner and the co-accused shocks the conscience of the court as well as the general public, where it is alleged that the petitioner and other police officers, who hold high posts in the criminal justice system, have stooped to the level of tampering with the documents with the help of the accused in the case," Justice Uma observed while dismissing the petition.

Cothas Coffee turns 75; new products and expansion plans in the offing

Shilpa Elizabeth
BENGALURU

Currently, there are about 60 Cothas Coffee stores across South India N. RAVICHANDRAN

Bengaluru's home-grown coffee brand Cothas Coffee has completed 75 years since it started as a small neighbourhood coffee shop in Shivajinagar. As the company enters the next leg of its journey, the brand is gearing up to expand its product offerings and take its ambitions beyond the seas.

"We plan to have 100 stores by the end of the financial year," said Nitin C.S., managing partner at Cothas Coffee. Currently, there are about 60 Cothas Coffee stores across South India.

International store
According to Mr. Nitin, who is also third generation at the family-owned business, the company is hoping to open its first international store in Dubai by the end of the year.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, he added that new products, such as instant coffee, would be added to the line of offering as part of completing 75 years.

Krishnaiah Chetty started Cothas Coffee in 1949 as a small coffee shop on Dharmaraja Koil Street in Shivajinagar.

In the years that followed, the family opened more stores near Meenakshi Koil Street, Kempe Gowda Road, and Malleswaram.

In the 70s, the company imported a roasting machine from Germany, set up a factory in J.P. Nagar and centralised the process. The father-son duo C.K. Sreenathan and Nithin currently manage the operations. "In Bengaluru, approximately there are about 20,000 grocery stores. Our products are there in at least 16,000 of them," Mr. Sreenathan estimates. Exports constitute about 5% of the business. In the last decade, the company ventured to capture the out-of-home market by supplying to big hotel chains, offices etc.. It also introduced vending solutions and added new product offerings.

DETAILS ON
» PAGE 9

Panel to probe charges of irregularities in payments for works in R.R. Nagar

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The investigation will cover payments made between September 18, 2020, and July 19, 2022. FILE PHOTO

Troubles continue to mount for Munirathna, who is currently facing legal scrutiny in three cases, including allegations of rape, with a Special Investigation Team (SIT) formed to probe the charges. Now, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has formed a five-member committee to investigate allegations of financial irregularities involving bill payments totalling ₹500 crore between 2020 and 2022, related to the R.R. Nagar assembly constituency, which Munirathna represents.

The committee, led by Special Commissioner (Revenue) Munish Moudgil, includes the Special Commissioner (Projects), Special Commissioner (Finance), Chief Engineer (Quality Assurance and Quality Control), and the Chief Engineer from the Technical Vigilance Cell under the Commissioner. BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath constituted this team on Monday and instructed them to carry out a comprehensive investigation.

Speaking to the press, Mr. Giri Nath said there were reports suggesting that payments exceeding the billed amounts had been made. To investigate these claims, the committee, led by the Special Commissioner (Revenue), was formed.

The probe will focus on two key aspects: whether any approvals from competent authorities were obtained for the excess payments and the reasons for the cost escalations. Additionally, the team will examine the quality of work performed.

Mr. Giri Nath added, "A broader investigation is already underway regarding BBMP works across various zones, but this team will focus specifically on the R.R. Nagar zone." The investigation will cover payments made between September 18, 2020, and July 19, 2022.

Timings
BENGALURU

THURSDAY, SEP. 26		
RISE	06:09	SET 18:13
RISE	00:42	SET 14:04
FRIDAY, SEP. 27		
RISE	06:09	SET 18:12
RISE	01:39	SET 14:52
SATURDAY, SEP. 28		
RISE	06:09	SET 18:11
RISE	02:32	SET 15:34

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	31	24
Mysuru	28	20
Bengaluru	28	21

Bengaluru Today
29°C Morning will be pleasant. Day will be slight warm. Night also will be pleasant. Spell of light rain and thundershower will occur.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
30°C The weather will be dry. Day will be slight warm. Night also will be pleasant.

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THE HINDU
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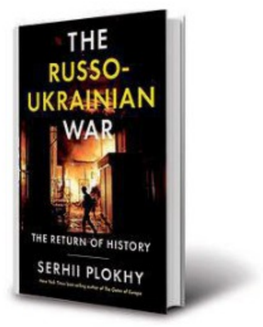
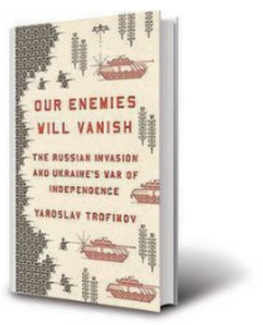
In ruins: An elderly woman pushes a cart past a destroyed building in the city of Pokrovsk, Donetsk region, on September 24. AFP





Roots of a conflict: an 'endless war' on the edge of Europe's frontier

Located at the western edge of the Eurasian steppe, Ukraine has been a gateway to Europe for many centuries, being a meeting place, and a battleground of empires from Roman to Ottoman, Habsburg to Romanov. Ukraine has a pivotal role in global and Russia's history, say writers

Shoumojit Banerjee

Vladimir Putin's "special military operation" in Ukraine which began in February 2022 – the largest and bloodiest invasion since the end of the Second World War in 1945 – has now taken on the nature of the fictional endless war described in George Orwell's *1984*.

The Russo-Ukrainian conflict has destroyed the European security structure built since the Helsinki Accords of 1975. While the Ukrainian resistance has surprised the West, fundamental questions persist: What made this war of aggression possible and what made the Ukrainians resist as they did and are continuing to do? What differentiates Ukrainians from Russians? What will be the consequences of the war for Ukraine, Russia, Europe, and the world?

Anyone wishing to understand the roots behind the ongoing conflict must start with acclaimed Harvard-based historian Serhii Plokhy's seminal *The Gates of Europe* (2015) and his superb *The Russo-Ukrainian War* (2023) – both masterpieces of concision and clarity.

Plokhy presents the longue durée history of Ukraine from the times of Herodotus to the fall of the USSR and the current Russo-Ukrainian conflict. Located at the western edge of the Eurasian steppe, Ukraine has been a gateway to Europe for many centuries, being a meeting place (and a battleground) of empires from Roman to Ottoman, Habsburg to Romanov.

Contentious legacy

He emphasises Ukraine's pivotal role in global history.

For example, the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 was precipitated by the Ukrainian referendum on independence, where over 90% of Ukrainians, including a majority in Russian-speaking Crimea, voted to leave the USSR. The ongoing conflict, however, is not just a contemporary geopolitical struggle but deeply rooted in history, particularly the contentious legacy of 'Kyivan Rus', a medieval polity founded by the Grand Prince Volodymyr (958-1015).

As Plokhy observes, most Russians believe that their state and nation originated in Kyiv, the centre of the medieval Kyivan Rus' polity, that encompassed a good part of what is now Ukraine, Belarus, and European Russia. Kyivan Rus' existed between the 10th and mid-13th centuries before disintegrating into semi-independent polities under the blows of the Mongol onslaught.

The Christianisation of Kyivan Rus' by Volodymyr (cited by Putin as the founding moment of the Russian world) tied the region culturally to Byzantium and Eastern Christianity, laying the foundation for centuries of Russian claims to Ukrainian territory.

One of Putin's obsessions in a 2021 essay was about foreign meddling in Russian history. But Volodymyr (to whom Putin dedicated a 17-metre statue outside the Kremlin) was himself a foreigner, a Scandinavian Viking who imposed Christianity on his Slavic subjects in order to bring them into the European world of Christendom. The Kyivan Rus' myth originated in the mid-15th century, with Ivan III of Moscow asserting his dynasty's Kyivan roots to legitimise his conquest of Novgorod.

Fuelled by a myth

This myth bolstered Moscow's authority and justified further conquests of Ukrainian and Belarusian lands. Ivan's victory marked the rise of an independent, authoritarian Russian state which he passed on to his grandson, Ivan IV ('The Terrible').

While Ivan IV expanded Muscovy's rule by wiping of the post-Mongol Volga khanates, he was defeated in the Livonian War (1558-83) by a coalition of states that included Poland-Lithuania, Sweden, and Denmark. The 17th century saw Moscow captured by the Poles and their allies, the Ukrainian Cossacks. During this time, Muscovy separated itself from Kyiv and the Ukrainian lands both politically and in religious terms.

The Muscovites no longer regarding Kyivans as fellow Orthodox believers, claiming that they had been 'corrupted' by accepting the rule of Catholic kings and becoming open to the West. While Muscovy paused in its obsession with Kyiv and its history, the Ukrainians sought the aid of the Russian Tsar in 1648 when under their Hetman (leader) Bohdan Khmelnytsky, the Ukrainian Cossacks rebelled against Polish rule.

Transactional relationship

In *Overreach* (2022), journalist Owen Matthews observes that Khmelnytsky's oath to the Tsar would set the pattern for centuries of Ukrainian-Russian relations right up to the 21st century – transactional, and dictated by expediency under pressure from outside powers.

Memories of the Kyivan heritage were again revived by Muscovy for protection of their Orthodox brethren (Ukrainian Cossacks) against the Polish Catholics who were duly defeated.

But the incorporation of the Ukrainian Cossack state into Moscow again sparked Cossack resistance in 1708, when their Hetman Ivan Mazepa allied with Sweden's Charles XII against Tsar Peter 'The Great' only to be defeated at Poltava in 1709.

Catherine II destroyed the Hetmanate and integrated the Cossacks polity into the Russian Empire, but 19th-century Ukrainian nationalists revived their memory, observes Plokhy in *The Russo-Ukrainian War*.

The fall of the Romanov dynasty in March 1917 led to the creation of autonomous polities on the territory of the Russian Empire. The Bolshevik coup in October that year saw the destruction of Tsarist imperial institutions. In 1922, Lenin and Stalin clashed over the new Soviet state's structure with Lenin proposing a Union of Socialist Soviet Republics with equal terms for all republics, including Russia. However, after his death, Stalin's brutal policies led to the 1932-33 'Holodomor' in Ukraine, resulting in the deaths of millions of peasants in the Ukraine.

At the time of the 1991 referendum, neither Gorbachev nor Yeltsin had imagined the Soviet Union without Ukraine, its second-largest republic and a key element of Russian imperial and Soviet history and mythology.

Restoring the imperial project in any form would depend on Russia's ability to bring Ukraine back into the fold, observes Plokhy.

First draft of history

Matthews *Overreach* is a superb first draft of history exploring Putin's decision to bring Ukraine back into the fold by launching his offensive in a bubble of COVID-induced paranoia.

Among eyewitness accounts of Ukraine's resilience in the face of the Russian invasion, none is more searing than Yaroslav Trofimov's *Our Enemies Will Vanish* (2024), which invites comparisons with Michael Herr's Vietnam war classic *Dispatches* (1977).

Shoumojit Banerjee is a Pune-based journalist and editor

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

A quiz on the life and works of T.S. Eliot, one of 20th century's greatest literary figures, on his 136th birthday

V.V. Ramanan

QUESTION 1
An easy one to begin with. Expand the initials T.S. in the great poet's name.

QUESTION 2
Of the four parts of Eliot's 'Four Quartets', two are 'Burnt Norton' and 'East Coker'. Name the other two.

QUESTION 3
Which work is called Eliot's 'conversion poem' because it was written after his conversion to Anglicanism in 1927?

QUESTION 4
To which literary figure was Eliot's most famous work 'The Wasteland' dedicated and from where did he get the title?

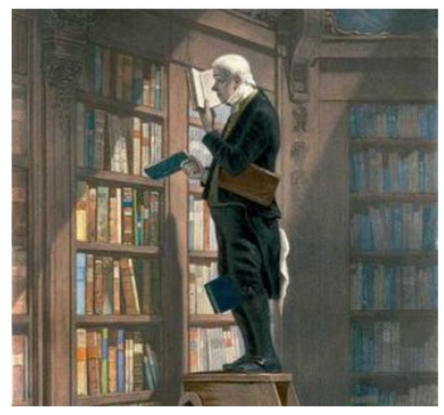
QUESTION 5
In 'Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats', if Macavity is the Mystery Cat, then who are the The Cat about Town and The Railway Cat?

QUESTION 6
Before becoming a noted literary figure, at which famous bank did Eliot work?

QUESTION 7
In the 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock', how does the protagonist measure out his life?

Visual question:
This World Heritage Site is the setting for which of Eliot's famous works?
GETTY IMAGES

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. The initial titles of the show *Friends*. **Ans: Insomnia Cafe, Friends Like Us, and Six of One**
2. This character in the show had a pet monkey whose name was this. **Ans: Ross; Marcel**
3. Courteney Cox was initially asked to play this role in the show. **Ans: Rachel Green**
4. The name of the show in which Joey portrays the role of Dr. Drake Ramoray. **Ans: Days of Our Lives**
5. The two main cast members who won an Emmy and the only actor who was not nominated. **Ans: Jennifer Aniston and Lisa Kudrow won an Emmy. Cox is the only actor not to be nominated**
6. The show is quoted in this tennis player's book. **Ans: Andre Agassi; *Open***
7. Identify this actor, who was married to this main actor of *Friends*. **Ans: David Arquette; he was married to Courteny Cox**
Early Birds: Abhyuday Singh Bhadauria| Annkita Thakur| Bharath Viswanathan



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

K. Subrahmanian Upendran

"Did you see the men's singles finals last night?

"Of course, I did."

"Wasn't it a fantastic match?"

"According to me, it was a great match."

"You can't say that."

"I can't say it was a great match?"

"Of course, you can. But you can't say, 'According to me, it was a great match.' You see, we use 'according to' when we pass on information which we have received from other people. According to the Finance Minister, inflation is definitely coming down."

"I don't think anybody actually believes that!"

"I'm sure there are some people who do. Anyway, when you say 'According to X, Y is beautiful,' it means that in X's opinion Y is beautiful."

"I see. But when you say 'according to,' does the source of information always have to be a person?"

"No. The source of information can be anything – books, articles, whatever. According to this article, all forests will be destroyed by the year 2000."

"The author must be a gloomster. I don't think the forests will be destroyed by the year 2000. According to me... Sorry, I forgot I shouldn't say 'according to me.' Tell me, what should I say?"

"Well, you could say, 'In my opinion' or 'If you ask me'."

"In my opinion, the forests will continue to be there for another 200 years. How's that?"

"Fine."

"If you ask me, train travel is more enjoyable than air travel."

"But the most enjoyable experience of all is staying at home. There's no place like home is what I say!"

"I don't agree with you. People must travel, they must... Where's today's paper?"

"On the table. What do you need it for?"

"I want to find out what film is being shown at our local theatre. Let's see now. Hey, what's this! I've never come across this word before."

"What word?"

"I don't even know how to pronounce it. But it's spelt c...i...a...o."

"Oh, its 'chow'."

"Chow!"

"Yes, it rhymes with 'how' and 'now'. The 'c' is pronounced like the 'ch' in 'church.' You see 'ciao' is an Italian word."

"Italian word! Last week, I learnt the Italian word 'banca'. This week, it's 'ciao.' At this rate, I'll become a fluent speaker of Italian."

"Well, when you learn English, you end up learning a little bit of everything – French, German, Russian Italian, Latin..."

"Stop. You are making my head swim."

"Sorry."

"Not your fault. Anyway, what does 'ciao' mean?"

"It's a way of greeting someone or bidding goodbye to someone."

"I'll go to the market now and buy a few things."

"Ciao."

"Ciao."

Published in The Hindu on June 29, 1993.

Word of the day

Clement:
physically mild (of weather or climate); inclined to show mercy (used of persons or behaviour)

Usage: *If he had been a more clement judge, he would have reduced the sentence.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/clementpro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /'klɛmənt/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

भारतीय समुद्री विश्वविद्यालय
INDIAN MARITIME UNIVERSITY

(A Central University under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Government of India)
Established by an Act of the Parliament in 2008

Advt No IMU-HQ/C/42/11/01/2024-9th Conv Dated: 26.09.2024

NOTIFICATION OF NINTH CONVOCATION

1. Please refer to the Notification dated 02.09.2024 hosted on the IMU website.
2. In this regard, it is informed that the Ninth Convocation **will be held on Monday, 07.10.2024 at 10:00 AM** at IMU-HQ, Chennai for the students who have successfully registered for receiving degrees In-Person until 15.09.2024.
3. The students who have registered to receive their degrees/ diplomas **In-Person** for the 9th Convocation until 15.09.2024 should be present at the registration counters on **Sunday, 06.10.2024 from 10:00 AM to 04:00 PM** at IMU-HQ, Chennai without fail. The students who fail to register on 06.10.2024, will not be permitted to attend the convocation ceremony on 07.10.2024.
4. It is further reiterated that candidates who have still not registered for the 9th Convocation have to mandatorily register in the student portal for receiving their Degree/Diploma in **In-Absentia only.** Without registration in the Convocation portal, Degree/Diploma certificate will not be dispatched.
5. Registration link for In-absentia is as follows:

   https://exam.imu.edu.in/imu/student/student_login?cs=1

REGISTRAR

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client is intending to purchase the schedule property from Sri. DAMODHAR.R HULEKAL, S/o. Sri. Ramarao Srinivas Hulekal, aged about 61 years, Residing at No. Flat No. T-304, Baba Residency, 8th Cross Street, BHCS Layout, Subramanyapura Post, Uttarahalli, Bengaluru-560061. Anybody has got any sort of right, claim, interest over the schedule property or having any sort of objection for the said transaction shall approach the under mentioned Advocate within 7 days from this day with documentary evidence, failing which my client shall proceed further in accordance with the terms of the agreement considering there is no objection to the said sale transaction.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

ITEM NO.1

All that piece and parcel of the converted immovable property bearing RE. Sy No. 22/3, Old Sy. No.22, New Sy no.22/2, measuring 0.08 Guntas, converted from agricultural purpose to non agricultural residential purpose vide No. 203289 dt: 10/02/2021 issued by Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore urban district, Situated at: Raghuvanahalli Village, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, and presently within the administrative Jurisdiction of BBMP Ward No. 198, having Khatha No.22/3,
AND BOUNDED ON:
East by : Road (La. Hi. No. 1)
West by : Block No. 1,
North by : Sy No.25 there after BCMC Layout park
South by : BCMC Layout park (La. Hi. No.1)

ITEM NO.2

All that piece and parcel of the converted immovable property bearing Re. Sy. No. 25/8, Old Sy No.25/1, New Sy No.25/7, measuring 00.01 1/2 Guntas converted from agricultural purpose to non agricultural residential purpose vide No. 203292 dt: 10/02/2021 issued by Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore urban district Situated at: Raghuvanahalli Village, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk. and presently within the administrative Jurisdiction of BBMP Ward No.198, having Khatha No.25/8,
AND BOUNDED ON:
East by : Road (La.Hi. No. 1)
West by : Block No. 1,
North by : BCMC Layout park
South by : La.Sy No.22

N.S. SHIVASHANKAR, Advocate
48/1, 2nd Floor, 1st Cross, Opp: Canara Bank, Vallabha Nagar, Uttarahalli Main Road, Uttarahalli, Bangalore-61.
Ph No. 9343094442, 080-41628629

Shirur landslip: Body of Kerala lorry driver missing since July 16 found in river

11 persons lost their lives in the landslip on NH 66; bodies of two victims yet to be found

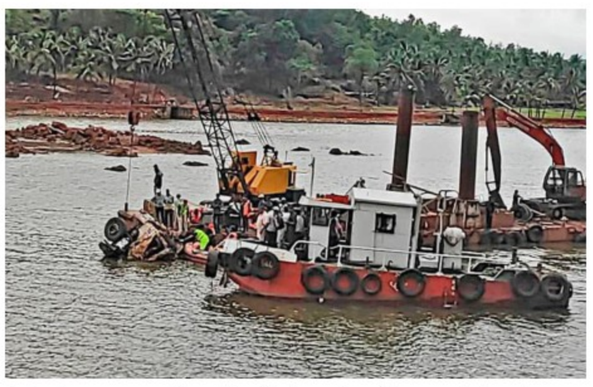
The Hindu Bureau
BELAGAVI

As many as 71 days after they were reported missing following a landslip, the body of Arjun, a lorry driver from Kerala, and his vehicle were found by a team of divers and dredgers in the Gangavali at Shirur in Uttara Kannada district on Wednesday.

The team was able to locate the mangled vehicle and recover the body from the cabin after the rescue operation was resumed six days ago.

The location was calculated by former Navy officer Indra Balan and his team. They had suggested that the rescuers look for the vehicle behind the shop of one Lakshman Naik. A dredger was used to pull up the lorry, officials said.

As many as 11 persons lost their lives in the landslip on National Highway 66 on July 16. Bodies of nine victims have been recovered so far. The bodies of two other victims – Jagannath and Lokesh – are yet to be found.



A dredger was used to pull up the lorry from Gangavali river at Shirur in Uttara Kannada district on Wednesday.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Was asleep

Arjun had stopped his lorry at Shirur village after deciding to rest. He was asleep in the vehicle when the landslip occurred. The mud and heavy rain led to his vehicle being washed away in the river.

Radar technology was used to trace the body on Wednesday. The vehicle was heavily damaged and corroded in places. The body was partially decomposed. Arjun's family members arrived from Kerala along with a few legislators.

The search and rescue efforts carried out initially by the NDRF, the SDRF, divers such as Ishwar Malpe, and defence forces had not been successful. The rescue efforts were stopped owing to heavy rains and strong currents in the river. Meanwhile, the Kerala government had urged Karnataka to trace the body of Arjun.

The operation resumed on September 20. The dredger found a two-wheeler, the cabin of a gas tanker, and some vehicle wheels in the first two days.

Satish Sail, local MLA, told reporters that efforts would be continued to trace the two other bodies. Arjun's relative Rajan said the family was relieved to find the body.

"It is sad that we lost him at a young age. We thank the Karnataka government and the Uttara Kannada district administration," he said.

Reporting cybercrime within golden hour on 112 is a challenge for citizens

Jahnavi T.R.
BENGALURU

Citizens have reported that even when they dial 1930, the dedicated cybercrime helpline, it takes two or three tries to get an operator to talk to

Netra Kiran, a private firm employee, received 35 calls from over 30 numbers within an hour last month. They were all spam calls where people claiming to be from the 'Finance Recovery Department' harassed her to transfer money. To report the harassment, she called 112 every few minutes. But upon being redirected to the cybercrime helpline, the calls would get cut after a minute without any response.

No response

"I had heard that you should report cybercrime within the first hour of its occurrence. That is why I kept trying to reach the officials on 112, as it was the emergency response number I was aware of. After getting no response and upon being directed to the cybercrime helpline (1930), I opted to speak to police services. There I was given a number to reach cybercrime officials, but when I called that number, it was out of order," she said.

Like Ms. Kiran, many people who dial 112 to report cybercrimes often fail to get a response. With the police stressing the need to report the crime within the golden hour, 112 is the first step for many victims.

Srinidhi D., a businessman from Bengaluru, clicked on a link which looked like an authentic bank link and lost ₹10,000.

"I immediately dialled 112. When I was directed to the cybercrime extension, a recorded message said that the operators were busy. I tried again after 10 minutes, and I got the same message and the call ended. I then went to the nearest police station and reported it. What is the use of having an emergency number?"

> The number of calls received by the helpline has increased almost 12-fold between 2022 and 2024.
> **C.B. RYSHYANTH,** Superintendent of Police (Wireless)

Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Command Centre, Kshama Mishra said the Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) was alerted about this issue a few months ago. "After we had highlighted these concerns, they had taken necessary measures. If it is happening again, we will alert them," she said.

While this happens on 112 calls, citizens have reported that even when they dial 1930, the dedicated cybercrime helpline, it takes two or three tries to talk to an operator. The police officials attributed this to an increase in the number of calls to the helpline.

According to C.B. Ryshyanth, Superintendent of Police (Wireless), the number of calls received by the helpline has increased almost 12-fold between 2022 and 2024. "In 2022, it received 1,30,333 calls. In 2023, we received 4,67,258 calls and in 2024, until July 31, we had received 7,39,299 calls, and the number might double by the end of the year."

He said as the calls keep increasing, the number of respondents is also being increased accordingly. He said that citizens should directly dial 1930 in case of cybercrime emergencies.

None of the officials were able to explain why the calls, which get diverted to 1930 from 112, do not get responses most of the time, except calling it a technical glitch.

Five more phones with active SIM cards seized from central prison

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Despite heightened security and surveillance, mobile phones with active SIM cards continue to be seized in Bengaluru Central Prison. Two fresh FIRs have been registered following the discovery of five mobile phones and SIM cards inside the prison on Sunday and Tuesday.

Prison officials now suspect that some inmates and prison staff may be operating a "mobile service" inside the facility. During an inspection led by Sharanaiah Hiremath, the prison jailor, an under-trial prisoner (UTP) named Madhu, was found carrying a mobile phone and behaving suspiciously near the special security cell. Further searches led to the recovery of another phone with an active SIM card hidden under a wash basin in the washroom.

Authorities believe that these mobile phones are being used by inmates who pay high prices to gangs. There is also suspicion that some prison staff may be involved, as smuggling phones into the prison without inside help is deemed unlikely.

In another raid led by Assistant Superintendent Karna B. Kshathri, three additional mobile phones with active SIM cards were found on the window sill of the washroom in barrack no. 8, where UTPs are housed.

All five seized phones have been sent for forensic analysis by the Parappana Agrahara police. This incident has drawn further attention to ongoing security issues at the prison.

Following a previous high-profile incident involving actor Darshan, a security audit was conducted, leading to the installation of additional mobile jammers, surveillance cameras, and tighter security checks. However, since these measures were introduced, more than two dozen mobile phones have been confiscated from the prison.

Labourer arrested for killing mother

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Manchenahalli police in Chickballapur district on Wednesday arrested a 32-year-old labourer for beating his mother to death over a fight over her affair.

The accused, Chandrashekhar, a daily wage labourer, was arrested within a few hours of the murder from a nearby hill where he was hiding.

Khushal Chowksey, SP, Chickballapur, who visited the murder spot, said the deceased, Ramanjinamma, 50, a resident of Chikkahosahalli, was also a labourer who had lost her husband a few years ago and in a relationship with a man from the neighbourhood.

Chandrashekhar was staying along with his mother after being separated from his wife. He used to warn his mother to stay away from liquor and also from her male friend, and the duo fought frequently over this issue.

On Wednesday, the duo had a fight, and in the melee, Chandrashekhar assaulted her and pushed her to the ground. The victim sustained a fatal injury on the back of her head and was killed due to heavy bleeding, the police said.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
OPEN TENDER NOTICE NO 22/SBC/24 of 16-09-2024
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following works:

Sl.	Description of work	Approx Value
1	**Bengaluru - Mysuru Section :-** Supply, installation, commis--sioning and maintenance of track mounted Automatic Gauge Face Lubricator on 61 curves for a period of 5 years in Senior Divisional Engineer/West Section.	Rs. 7,55,99,386/-
2	**Bengaluru - Jolarpettai Section :-** Supply, installation, commissioning and maintenance of track mounted Automatic Gauge Face Lubricator on 42 curves for a period of 5 years in Divisional Engineer/East Section.	Rs. 5,20,52,036/-
3	**Bengaluru - Salem Section and Chikka Banavara - Hassan Section :-** Supply, installation, commissioning and maintenance of track mounted Automatic Gauge face lubricators on 29 curves (SSE/PWAY/Hosur Section) and 1 Curve (SSE/PWAY/Channarayapatna) for period of 5 years in Divisional Engineer/South Section	Rs. 3,71,80,026/-
4	**Bengaluru- Dharmavaram and Bengaluru - Sampige Road Section** : Supply, installation, commissioning and maintenance of track mounted Automatic Gauge Face lubricators on 75 curves for period of 5 years in Senior Divisional Engineer/North Section.	Rs. 9,29,50,065/-

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 15:00 Hrs. on 14-10-2024**
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
PUB/438/AAF/PRB/SWR/2024-25 Senior Divisional Engineer /Co-Ordination/Bengaluru
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE
Office of the Executive Engineer-3, Health and Sanitation, Dasappa Hospital Premises, N.R. Road, Bengaluru - 560002.
No: EE-3/H&S/TEND/01/2024-25 Date: 25-09-2024
INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT)
(Two Cover System) (Through GOK KPP Portal only)
The Executive Engineer-3, Health and Sanitation, BBMP, Bengaluru invites Proposals (Technical & Financial) for appointing Contractor for Upgradation of Animal Birth Control (ABC) Center Located at RR Nagara, Dasarahalli, East, West and South Zones as detailed below.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work
1	Upgradation of Animal Birth Control (ABC) Center Located at RR Nagara, Dasarahalli and East Zones. **Amount Put to Tender (Rs. in Lakhs): 101.73, EMD Amount (in Rs.): 1,53,000/-**
2	Upgradation of Animal Birth Control (ABC) Center Located at West and South Zones. **Amount Put to Tender (Rs. in Lakhs): 40.05, EMD Amount (in Rs.): 80,100/-**

Calendar of Events: **1)** RFP Document may be downloaded from the GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in from 27-09-2024 at 16.00 Hrs. onwards. 2)** Last Date for Receipt of Queries: **03-10-2024 upto 16.00 Hours. 3)** Date of Pre Bid Meeting on **04-10-2024 at 15.00 Hours at the Office of the Executive Engineer-3 (H&S). 4)** Last Date for Receipt of Tenders is **15-10-2024 upto 16.00 Hours. 5)** Date of Opening of Technical Proposals is **16-10-2024 at 16.30 Hours. 6)** Date of Opening of Financial Bids: **Will be intimated to Technically Qualified Bidders.** Further details can be had from the above office.
Sd/- Executive Engineer-3, Health and Sanitation, BBMP.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-PROCUREMENT (IREPS)
TENDER NOTICE No. HE-12-2024-25
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Auctions for the following works.

Name of the Work:	Approx. Cost:
Provision of grid connected roof top solar plants at railway stations, staff quarters, and LC gates over Hubballi division.	Rs. 15,85,40,844.74

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 11:00 Hrs on 18.10.2024**
For details log on : **www.ireps.gov.in**
Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer/ General, Hubballi
PUB/455/AAD360/PRB/SWR/2024-25
South Western Railway - SWR SWRRLY SWRRLY

PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT the land owners as mentioned underneath have represented that they are the owners of the properties to the extent as mentioned. It is brought to the Notice of the general public that my client has negotiated and agreed to purchase the schedule properties from the said land owners. All person/ persons claiming or having any claim against or to the schedule properties or any part thereof by way of inheritance. Mortgage, sale, conveyance, MOU, agreement to sell, transfer, lease deed , tenancy, license, lien, charge, trust, maintenance, easement, gift, exchange, possession, adverse possession or otherwise howsoever are hereby required to submit the same in writing along with documentary proof to the undersigned within 7 days from the date of publication hereof failing which my client shall proceed to register the sale deeds without any reference to such claim and the same, if any , will be considered as waived.

Sl. No.	Village	Name of Land Owners	Sy. No.	Extent
1	Shetterhalli Village, Kasaba Hobli Devanahalli Taluk Bengaluru Rural	Murali Thangappa Nair	115/2	3 A 19 G
2		Jayaram S/o Anjinappa	115/8	0 A 21.12 G
3		Ravansurada	117/1	1 A 38 G
4		D Shravya	117/2	1 Acre
5		Thamma Krishna and K Leela Krishna	117/4	0 A 20 G
6		Umesh Kumar	119/2	0 A 6 Gu
7			119/4	0 A 6 Gu
8			119/5	0 A 6.12
9			119/6	0 A 5 Gu
10		T Marappa	119/3	0 A 23.12 G
11			120/4	0 A 17 G
12		Nagesh C	120/1	0 A 12.08G
13		Narayanswamy	120/2	0 A 20 G
14		A Ramesh and Sunitha Ramesh	120/3	0 A 20 G
15		Muniraju C	120/5	0 A 12.08 G
16		Smt Muniyamma	120/6	0 A 5 G
17		Smt Subamma	120/7	0 A 5 G
18		Bhagyamma	120/8	0 A 20 G
19		Smt Munibeeramma	120/9	0 A 25 G
20		Sri Nagaraj	121/1	1 Acre
21		Sri Jayaram	121/2	1 Acre
22		Sri A Ravi	121/3	1 Acre
23		Sri A Ramanijappa	121/4	1 Acre
24		Smt Narayanamma	121/5	0A 7 G
25		Smt Lakshmidevamma	121/6	0A 7G
26		Umesh Kumar C	122/1	1 A 7 G
27		Venkatalakshamma	123/2	0 A 13 G
28		D Shravya	124/3	0 A 25.04 G
29	Lakshmipura Village	R Hanumantha Gowda	44/1	2 A 20 G
30			45	4 A 15 G

Dated this 24th day of September 2024.
SANTOSH S NAGARLE, Advocate
4708, 7th Floor, High Point - IV, Palace Road, Bengaluru 560001
Ph. No.: 9845594939

ಸಿಎಸ್ಐಆರ್ - ಕೇಂದ್ರೀಯ ಆಹಾರ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನ ಸಂಶೋಧನಾಲಯ, ಮೈಸೂರು - 570020, ಭಾರತ
सीएसआईआर–केंद्रीय खाद्य प्रौद्योगिक अनुसंधान संस्थान, मैसूर–570 020, भारत
CSIR-CENTRAL FOOD TECHNOLOGICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE, MYSURU - 570 020, INDIA
cftri
ADVERTISEMENT NO. 01/2024
CSIR–CFTRI, a premier R&D institute in the area of food science and technology, invites online applications for temporary posts of (1) Project Associate Level-1 (4 positions), and (2) Sr. Project Associate (2 positions) for its ongoing R&D projects
For educational qualifications, experience, age, emoluments, etc. and to submit the online applications **(on or before 03.10.2024),** candidates are requested to visit patcell.cftri.res.in.
Sd/-
Controller of Administration

HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT
ENGINEERING WING
Office of the Chief Engineer, Arogya Soudha, 3rd floor, Leprosy Hospital Premises, 1st Cross, Magadi Road, Bengaluru-560 023 Telephone No.: 080-29557023 E-mail:**cekhsdrp@gmail.com**
No:HFWD/EW/CE/TA-2&3/AE-3,5&6/TND/2024-25/1783 Date:24.09.2024
TENDER NOTIFICATION
The Chief Engineer, H&FWD, Engineering Wing, Bengaluru invites tender from eligible contractors registered in KPWD in Two Cover tender document system through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal for the following works.

Sl. No	Description of works	Amount put to Tender (Rs. In Lakhs)	EMD (Rs. In Lakhs)	Stipulated period for Completion (including monsoon)
1	Construction of 50 Bedded MCH Hospital at **Athani** in Belagavi District.	1540.00	15.40	15 Months
2	Construction of 50 Bedded MCH Hospital at **Mudhol** in Bagalkote District.	1540.00	15.40	15 Months
3	Construction of Hostel for Medical Nursing & Paramedical Student at **BIMS** premises Belagavi.	382.00	5.73	11 Months
4	Construction of 50 Bed Critical Care Unit Hospital in **Chinthamani** in Chikkaballapura District.	1952.00	19.52	15 Months
5	Construction of 50 Bed Critical Care Unit in **Chigateri** District Hospital Premises, Davanagere.	1340.00	15.00	11 Months
6	Construction of 50 Bed Critical Care Unit Hospital in the premises of District Hospital at **Udupi.**	665.00	10.00	11 Months
7	Construction of District Integrated Public Health Laboratory in the premises of District Hospital **Mysuru** in Mysuru District-(Call-2)	90.00	1.80	06 Months

Calendar of Events: (Sl.No.1 to 6) (1) Last date for receipt of tenders: **28.10.2024 up to 16.00 hrs. (2)** Date of Opening of Tenders (Technical Bids): **29.10.2024 at 16.30 hrs. Calendar of Events: (Sl. No. 7) (1)** Last date for receipt of tenders: **09.10.2024 up to 16.00 hrs. (2)** Date of Opening of Tenders (Technical Bids): **10.10.2024 at 16.30 hrs.** The tender details can be downloaded from the KPP portal platform. Tenders shall be submitted electronically at **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** and tender processing fee shall also be paid electronically. Interested eligible contractors shall register on the e-procurement platform to participate in this tender.
NOTE: 1. All the rights are reserved by the undersigned for postponement or cancellation of entire tender process, rejection of bids / individual bid etc., without assigning any reason. 2. Henceforth, any changes in the schedule / contents will not be published through newspapers and further changes will be updated only on KPPP Portal.
Sd/- Chief Engineer, H&FWD, Engineering Wing, Bengaluru

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice No. 27 UBL 2024-25
Dated: 18-09-2024
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following works:

Sl.	Name of work	Approx. Value
1	**Hubballi Division :** Bannihatti-Ranjitpura: Protection of vulnerable cutting slope from boulder falling and Soil erosion by Turf reinforcement mat and Boulder netting.	Rs. 6,47,51,131/-
2	**Hubballi Division :** Alnavar-Londa-Vasco (LWR-LD-VSG) Section-Standardization of sand hump at Tavargatti (TVG), Devarai (DEV), Shivathan (SVTN), Tinaighat (TGT), Caranzol (CRZ), Dudhsagar (DDS), Sonalium (LIM), Kulem (QLM), Cansolium (CSM) and Sankval (SKVL)-18 No's.	Rs. 1,38,82,502/-
3	**Hubballi Division :** Repairs to drainage at Kulem and Repairs to Apron, Extension of Hydrant and drain cover between Road 1 & Road 2 at Vasco-da-Gama	Rs. 53,18,149/-
4	**Hubballi Division :** Hubballi - Londa (UBL-LD) Section - Construction of Limited Height subway in Lieu of LC No. 315 at Km. 516/9 to 517/000 in between Kanbarganvi - Kashinatti (KBI-KHST) Stations by Box pushing method.	Rs. 5,44,89,877/-
5	**Hubballi Division :** Supply of Ballast at Londa Depot (LD) in Senior Divisional Engineer/West/Hubballi Jurisdiction.	Rs. 3,15,67,225/-

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 18-10-2024**
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Engineer /Co-Ordination Hubballi
PUB/450/AAF/PRB/SWR/2024-25
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

JHARKHAND MEDICAL & HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT & PROCUREMENT CORPORATION LTD.
MCH BUILDING, RCH CAMPUS, NAMKUM, RANCHI – 834010.
(CIN – U85510OJH2013SGC001276)E-mail:jmhidpc2014@gmail.com
Website: https://jmhidpcl.jharkhand.gov.in/
GST NO: 20AADCJ4293L2ZH, PAN NO: AADCJ4293L
Bid Ref. No. JMC/NIT-24/MRI-CT Scan/16 Date: 23.09.2024
Selection of Agency for Supply, Installation and Commissioning and operation & maintenance of MRI 1.5 Tesla and CT Scan 32 Slices for selected location in Jharkhand on Trun-key Basis for 5 Years
The **(JMHIDPCL), Ranchi** hereby invites separate **Technical Bid** and **Financial Bid** (two envelope system) through e-procurement from eligible Manufacturer/ their Authorized Dealer /Distributors/ Authorized Stockiest for health facilities of the State of Jharkhand.
The Bid documents with detailed conditions can be viewed and downloaded through website http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in and should be submitted through e-procurement system only. The eligible Bidder(s) willing to participate must be registered in e-procurement portal.

Particulars	Date & Time
Date of Publication of Bid	**26-09-2024**
Bid Submission Start Date	**24-10-2024**
Bid Submission Closing Date & Time	**04-11-2024 05:00 PM**
Bid Opening Date for Technical Proposal	**05-11-2024 05:00 PM**
Application Fee (Non-Refundable)	**5900**/- (Rupees **Online payment Gateway**)
Earnest Money Deposit	**Rs 5,000,00,00**/- (Rupees **Online payment Gateway**)
Contact/ Helpline No. of E-Procurement Cell	**+91-8709368893**
Pre-bid meeting Date & Time	**07-10-2024 at 12:00 PM**

Note: The above dates may change due to declaration of holidays. In the event of any of the dates being declared as a holiday for the office of the JMHIDPCL, the Bids will be opened on the next working day at the appointed time.
JMHIDPCL reserves the right to amend or withdraw any of the terms and conditions contained in the Bid document including quantity/ number of items to be supplied or to reject any or all Bids without giving any notice or assigning any reason. The decision of the Managing Director, JMHIDPCL in this regard shall be final.
Managing Director. JMHIDPCL.
PR 337046 (Jharkhand Medical & Health Infrastructure Dev & Procurement Corp Ltd) 24-25 (D)

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for the information of the General Public that my clients **Sri. Gauri Shanker Singh** S/o. Girija Roy and **Smt. Chetana B R** W/o Sri. Gauri Shanker Singh, intend to purchase the below mentioned Schedule property from **Mr. Mohammed Murtaza** S/o. Late. Syed Anwar Hussain and **Mrs. N. Sameen Zehra** W/o.Mr.Mohammed Murtaza. Hence the public are hereby notified that if anyone has got any valid claim, right, title or interest in relation to the Schedule property he/she / they shall inform the same within one 15 days from the date of publication of this public notice. Otherwise my client would proceed to purchase the schedule property.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of vacant property comprising of vacant site bearing New Municipal No.03 (Old Site No.69), present PID No. 15-11-3, Situated at 19th Main Road, 2nd Block, Rajajinagar, BBMP Old Ward No.15, New Ward No.99, Bengaluru, measuring East to West 90-00 feet and North to South 56-00 feet totally measuring 5040 Sq.ft and bounded on:

East by : Road **West by : Site No. 13 and 14**
North by : Site No. 68 **South by : Site No. 70**

Sri. Shivaram B R., Advocate
O/at No.161/A, 5th Main, 2nd Phase, 2nd Stage,
Mahalakshmipuram, Bengaluru-560086.
Mob No.+91 9844536322 E-mail Id: sbradvocate23@gmail.com

Government of Jharkhand

Department of Information Technology & e-Governance

3rd Floor, Jharkhand Mantralaya, Dhurwa, Ranchi -4

Recruitment Notice

Online applications are invited from suitable candidates for the following post on contractual basis under UIDAI project at the Department of Information Technology and e-Governance, Government of Jharkhand.

Name of Post	No. of post(s)	Consolidated remuneration	Eligibility	Qualification and experience	Duration
Application Developer	One (01) - UR	Rs. 57,200/-per month	B.E./B. Tech in Electronics & Telecommunication / Computer Science Engineering / IT with First Class or MCA with First Class.	Post Qualification Experience of at least Five (05) Years in application development	One (01) Year

For online application and detailed advertisement, the applicants are required to visit the portal ***https://recruitment.jharkhand.gov.in.****. Offline applications will not be entertained. Last Date of online application is* ***15-October-2024****.*

Sd/-
Dy. Secretary Department of IT & e-Gov.

PR 337031 Information Technology(24-25)D

DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR

KARNATAKA BUILDING AND OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKERS' WELFARE BOARD

Kalyana Suraksha Bhavana, ITI Compound, Bannerughatta Road, Bengaluru-560029.
Office : 080-29753354/56, Email: **karbuildworkerswelfare@gmail.com**

No. KBOCWWB/AA/TOOLKITS/2024-25 **Date : 25.09.2024**

Short Term Tender Notification

Tenders (Two bid system-Technical and Financial bids) are hereby invited by Karnataka Building and other Construction Workers Welfare Board from interested Agencies as per Terms and conditions described in the Bid document for below mentioned.

1. Supply and Delivery of Mason Tool Kits in Jurisdiction of DLC Kalaburgi,DLC Belagavi, DLC Hassan, DLC Bengaluru-1 & DLC Bengaluru-2 Regions.

2. Supply and Delivery of Electrician Tool Kits in Jurisdiction of DLC Bengaluru -1 & 2, Belagavi, Hassan & Kalaburgi Regions.

Tenders shall be submitted electronically through e-procurement portal **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** of the Government of Karnataka. Last date of submission of completed tenders is on **10-10-2024 up to 5.00 pm.** For further details and information can be obtained from the Joint Secretary, KBOCWWB during office hours.

Sd/-
Joint Secretary, KB&OCWWB

DIPR/CP/2189/Zen/2024-25

HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT

ENGINEERING WING

Office of the Chief Engineer, Arogya Soudha, 3rd Floor,
Leprosy Hospital Premises, 1st Cross, Magadi Road, Bengaluru-560 023
Telephone No.: 080-29557023 E-mail:**cekhsdrp@gmail.com**
No:HFWD/EW/CE/TA-3/AE-8/TND/2024-25/1784 Date:25.09.2024

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Tender is invited from eligible Manufacturers in Two Tender document system in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Platform for the following work. Description of works: **Providing Furniture's to Newly Constructed Super Speciality Hospital at GIMS Kalaburgi.** Approximate Estimate cost (Excluding GST): **Rs. 784.50 lakhs.** EMD: **Rs. 11.77 lakhs.** Stipulated period for Completion(including monsoon): **3 months.**

Calendar of Events: (1) Last date for receipt of tenders: **28.10.2024 up to 16.00 hrs. (2)** Date of Opening of Tenders (Technical Bids): **29.10.2024 at 16.00 hrs.** The tender details can be downloaded from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Platform **(www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in).** Tenders shall be submitted electronically at **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** and Tender Processing Fee shall also be paid electronically. Interested eligible contractors shall register on the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Platform to participate in this tender.

NOTE: 1. All the rights are reserved by the undersigned for postponement or cancellation of entire tender process, rejection of bids /individual bid etc., without assigning any reason. 2. Henceforth, any changes in the schedule/contents will not be published through newspapers and further changes will be updated only on Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Platform.

Sd/- Chief Engineer, H&FWD, Engineering Wing, Bengaluru

JHARKHAND MEDICAL & HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT & PROCUREMENT CORPORATION LTD.

MCH BUILDING, RCH CAMPUS, NAMKUM, RANCHI – 834010.
(CIN – U855100JH2013SGC001276)E-mail:jmhidpc2014@gmail.com
Website: https://jmhidpcl.jharkhand.gov.in/
GST NO: 20AADCJ4293L2ZH, PAN NO: AADCJ4293L

Bid Ref. No. JMC/NIT-24/MRI-CT Scan/15 **Date: 23.09.2024**

Selection of Agency for Supply, Installation and Commissioning and operation & maintenance of MRI 3.0 Tesla and CT Scan 256 Slices for selected location in Jharkhand on Trunkey Basis for 10 Years

The **(JMHIDPCL), Ranchi** hereby invites separate **Technical Bid** and **Financial Bid** (two envelope system) through e-procurement from eligible Manufacturer/ their Authorized Dealer /Distributors/ Authorized Stockiest for health facilities of the State of Jharkhand.

The Bid documents with detailed conditions can be viewed and downloaded through website http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in and should be submitted through e-procurement system only. The eligible Bidder(s) willing to participate must be registered in e-procurement portal.

Particulars	Date & Time
Date of Publication of Bid	**26-09-2024**
Bid Submission Start Date	**24-10-2024**
Bid Submission Closing Date & Time	**04-11-2024 05:00 PM**
Bid Opening Date for Technical Proposal	**05-11-2024 05:00 PM**
Application Fee (Non-Refundable)	**5900**/- (Rupees **Online payment Gateway**)
Earnest Money Deposit	**Rs 3,000,00,00**/- (Rupees **Online payment Gateway**)
Contact/ Helpline No. of E-Procurement Cell	**+91-8709368893**
Pre-bid meeting Date & Time	**07-10-2024 at 12:00 PM**

Note: The above dates may change due to declaration of holidays. In the event of any of the dates being declared as a holiday for the office of the JMHIDPCL, the Bids will be opened on the next working day at the appointed time.

JMHIDPCL reserves the right to amend or withdraw any of the terms and conditions contained in the Bid document including quantity/ number of items to be supplied or to reject any or all Bids without giving any notice or assigning any reason. The decision of the Managing Director, JMHIDPCL in this regard shall be final.

PR 337042 Jharkhand Medical & Health Infrastructure Dev & Procurement Corp Ltd(24-25)#D

Managing Director. JMHIDPCL.

CITY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL SHAHABAD

www.shahabadcity/mrc.gov.in/email.ldistaff_ulb_shahabad@yahoo.com

No.: CMCS/T.S./15th Finance/2023-24/2024-25/ City Municipal Council Fund Date: 24.09.2024

:: E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTIFICATION ::

e-Procurement Tender is invited in KPP Portal by City Municipal Council Shahabad, for total 07 works under 15th Finance Scheme for the year 2023-24, 2024-25 and City Municipal Council Fund for the year 2023-24 along with Indent Number, subject to KW-1, KW-2 and KW-3 Terms, details are as below.

1) **Indent Number :** 1. DMA/2024-25/RD/Work_Indent 23570 (ST) Call-2, 2. DMA/2024-25/BD/Work_Indent 23888 Call-2, 3. DMA/2024-25/OW/Work_Indent 20347-Call-2, 4. DMA/2024-25/Ind2197 Call-2, 5. DMA/2024-25/BD/Work_Indent 22282 Call-2, 6. DMA/2024-25/ws/work_indent25340 Call-2, 7. DMA/2024-25/EL/work_Indent28149, 2) Amount of Estimate Rs. in Lakhs : **Min. 5.46, Max. 84.00,** 3) Amount put to Tender (Rs in Lakhs) : **Min. 5.45, Max. 71.23,** 4) Amount of EMD in Rupees : min. 13647/-, max. 168000/-, 4) Class of Contractor : As per KPPP Portal

1) Last date for submitting Tender in e-portal : **05.10.2024 at 5.30 PM,** 2) Date of opening the Tender : **07.10.2024 at 11.00 AM**, 3) Date of opening Financial Bid of Sl. No. of works (3) & (5) : **14.10.2024 at 11.00 AM**

Details of the said works and other conditions can be obtained through KPP Portal website www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in and further information if required can be obtained from the office of The Municipal Commissioner, City Municipal Council, Shahabad during office hours.

Sd/- Municipal Commissioner,
City Municipal Council, Shahabad.

DIPR/Kalaburagi/466/KSMC&A/2024-25

THINK LOGISTICS THINK CONCOR

कॉनकॉर CONCOR

Shri Sanjay Swarup
Chairman and Managing Director

CHAIRMAN'S SPEECH AT 36th AGM OF CONTAINER CORPORATION OF INDIA LIMITED

Held on 25th Sept., 2024

Putting India's Growth Story On High-speed

Dear Shareholders,

Ladies and Gentlemen !

Good afternoon. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I extend a very warm welcome to our shareholders and all stakeholders. It is a great privilege and honour to address you for the first time after taking over as Chairman and Managing Director of CONCOR in this 36th Annual General Meeting. Thank you for sparing your valuable time for joining this AGM of your Company.

The World today is at a juncture facing both new opportunities and concerns. On one hand, we have immense developments in the field of artificial intelligence, use of digital platforms, robotics and computing. While on the other, there is an instability created by global conflicts threatening peace, stability and economic development. And then there are the over-looming issues of climate change, rising cost of living, lack of food security, inadequate livelihood and decline in the global merchandise trade by 1.2% last year. In the last Union budget of India, there is an attempt to address these concerns by focusing on employment, skilling, MSMEs, infrastructure, energy security and next generation reforms, to accelerate socio economic development.

Albert Einstein has said and I quote-In the middle of every difficulty lies opportunity.

This is truly applicable to our country, which is an oasis of opportunities amidst global turmoil and supply chain disruptions, steadfastly marching ahead confidently to achieve the goal of Viksit Bharat in the Amrit Kaal.

The report of the Directors and Audited Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2024 with the reports of Auditors and comments of Comptroller & Auditor General of India have already been circulated to you and with your permission, I take them as read. Now, I would like to elaborate briefly inter-alia about the economic scenario, sectoral outlook and Company's achievements during the year 2023-24 along with the future prospects.

ECONOMIC SCENARIO:

As per the World Economic Outlook, April 2024 from International Monetary Fund (IMF), the global economy registered a growth of 3.2% in 2023, marginally lower than 3.4% in 2022. In this turbulent time, India is a lighthouse of growth as the fastest growing economy with 8.2% GDP growth last year. This has evoked global respect and a promise for a bright future for our country.

It is being predicted that India may contribute 18% of World GDP growth in next five years from 10% at present. Its per capita GDP is likely to touch US$4,000 by 2030 from around US$2,500 at present. The economic transformation achieved by India is a testimony of Governments' far-sighted policies and execution on the ground. It is expected that the capital allocation for creating physical and digital infrastructure and efficient execution, will propel the cycle of investment, consumption and employment.

In India, the major opportunities are emerging from diversification of global supply chains, digital revolution and the green transition. Recognising this, the Government has continued to carry out path breaking reforms and policy interventions to create conducive environment enhancing our competitiveness globally. Some of the major initiatives taken by the Government in this respect are enhanced public Capex., creating digital infrastructure, Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes to attract private investment, Atmanirbhar Bharat targeted welfare spending, efficient delivery of grass root benefits, etc.

The synergy of a large consumer market, progressive policy initiatives, favourable demographics, rising disposable income, technological provers has created heightened interest in leveraging India as a global hub for manufacturing, services and exports. This evokes new hopes and aspirations and will power India's growth in near future.

SECTORAL OUTLOOK:

A country's economic health depends upon the efficiency and robustness of its infrastructure. The logistics sector offers tremendous potential to grow in the coming years with rising production, consumption and increase in India's share in global trade. The Government's focus on infrastructure development with projects like Sagarmala, Bharatmala and Dedicated Freight Corridor with emphasis on port modernisation, improving road and rail connectivity will give boost to the sector by reducing transit time and costs.

The originating loading of cargo of Indian Railways was 1,590.63 million tonnes in 2023-24, registering an increase of 5.2% over previous year. The originating containerised cargo transported by rail was 85.04 million tonnes in 2023-24 reflecting an increase of 7%. The containers handled at all ports of the country were 21.00 million TEUs in 2023-24 with a growth of 9.5% over previous year.

India's current contribution to global trade (exports) is less than 2% which leaves a massive headroom for growth. Increase in country's participation in international value chain through a more organised logistics sector has emerged as a policy priority now for the Government. The major key industry drivers include:

- **Infrastructure development:** Rs.11 lakh crores which is 3.4% of the GDP, has been allocated towards capital expenditure in which Rs.2.55 lakh crore is for Railways. This reflects Government's resolve to develop a world-class logistics ecosystem in the country that can support growing trade. The National Logistics Policy (NLP) is a great enabler helping in streamlining the processes for seamless coordination. The Gati Shakti Cargo Terminal (GCT) policy of Indian Railways for multi-modal connectivity has promoted private investment in cargo terminal development.
- **Government Policies:** Implementation of Goods and Services Tax has simplified tax structure, removing the need for State specific warehouses. The Make in India and Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme have spurred domestic manufacturing, demand for industrial space and warehouses attracting significant investments.
- **Global manufacturing shift:** The global supply chain is undergoing significant shift with many companies looking to diversify this to India which is emerging as a key manufacturing destination for sectors like electronics, automobiles, semi-conductor, pharmaceuticals, etc.
- **Flourishing E-commerce:** Exponential rise of e-commerce has been the primary catalyst for the boom in logistics and warehouses. There is a change in consumer behaviour demanding convenience through last mile delivery, ease of return and other value-added services. As more consumers move to online shopping, there is a vast need of warehouses and fulfillment centres strategically located near the consumption points to enable quick deliveries.
- **Technological enhancement:** The solutions provided by modern technology is creating business opportunities across value chain. The adoption of automation, robotics, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IOT) has helped logistic sector in reducing human error, optimizing solutions, monitoring and managing services in real time thereby ensuring that goods are moved, stored and delivered with maximum efficiency.

I would like to assure you that your Company is fully geared up to reap the benefits from these emerging opportunities to achieve substantial growth.

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS:

In the backdrop of challenging global business environment, it is comforting to note that with the dedication and hard work of team CONCOR, your Company has delivered robust performance during the year. This impressive performance on various parameters are as follows:

Business Volumes, Turnover and Profitability

On the operational front, your company has handled 4.7 million TEUs during the year registering a healthy growth of 8.2% over previous year. It achieved a growth of 7.1% in EXIM throughput and 12.3% in Domestic throughput. With a surge in container handling and transportation volumes, in financial terms, your Company clocked a gross turnover of Rs.9,010 crores; an increase of 6.9% over previous year.

The net profit for 2023-24 was Rs.1,231 crores registering an increase of 5.3% over previous year reflecting our focus on operational efficiency and cost optimisation. The throughput handled, gross turnover and net profit were highest ever achieved in any financial year.

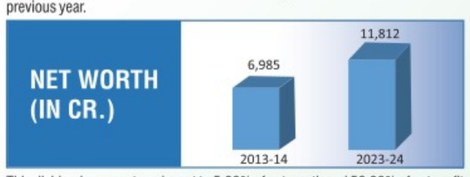
Capital Expenditure

In order to capitalise on emerging business opportunities and to achieve long term sustainable growth, the company is firmly continuing with its strategy of capacity addition with an expansion of its terminals, acquisition of wagons, containers, handling equipment and creating IT infrastructure. It incurred a capital expenditure of Rs.745 crores during the year. Further, recognising the importance of research and development for improving efficiency, mitigating risks and exploring new avenues, an expenditure of Rs.71.4 crores was incurred towards development of indigenous containers, solutions for bulk cement movement, modification and upgradation of BLC wagons into BLCM wagons. Three new terminals at Jajpur, Kadakola and Paradip were developed during the year.

Net Worth, Dividend and Market Capitalisation

The Net worth of the Company as on 31.03.2024 was Rs.11,812 crores. It scaled the highest ever market capitalisation of Rs.72,747 crores recently on 04.06.2024.

The Company has always followed the policy of rewarding its shareholders and now it is paying dividend every quarter. During the year, three interim dividends totalling to 180% (Rs.9/- per share) were paid and a final dividend of 50% (Rs.2.50 per share) has been proposed for your approval. The total dividend for the year would be Rs.700.69 crores as compared to Rs.670.22 crores in previous year.



This dividend payment works out to 5.93% of net worth and 56.93% of net profit of the Company for the year. As a testimony of your faith in the Company, the numbers of shareholders are growing consistently over the years which stands at around 3 lakh at present as compared to 1.49 lakhs last year.

STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES:

Your Company has cemented its leadership position with the largest available network of container terminals having presence in almost all container handling ports and major industrial hubs. It has a large fleet of rolling stock, containers, handling equipment, IT enabled operations with Customs and customer-interface enabling your Company to provide efficient and reliable value-added services to its customers.

Your Company is well poised to tap new business opportunities arising from potential growth in EXIM and domestic container volumes particularly from full commissioning of DFC. The initiative to use terminal capacity for promoting double stack movement between hinterland and gateway ports has helped in an increase of rail co-efficient and made its services more competitive. Several initiatives have been taken and strategies are in place to propel the business. Some of the strategies which are being adopted are as under:

- Setting up Gati Shakti Multimodal Cargo Terminals with road bridging solutions.
- Setting up of Multimodal Logistics Parks at strategic locations along the Dedicated Freight Corridors (DFC) and at major industrial estates.
- Entering into long term arrangements for bulk cement movement in tank container by rail.
- Promoting Double Stack Long Haul Trains and development of Rail Transshipment Hubs.
- Setting up and operation of state-of-the-art warehouses at various locations under PPP model.
- Promoting green logistics solutions through deployment of fleet of LNG trucks and setting up solar based infrastructure. Using 12 feet containers for rail transportation to capture light weight and volumetric cargo.
- To venture Internationally and work on the business opportunities which may emerge from India Middle East Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC) and International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC).
- Extensive and innovative use of technology for minimising cost and meeting customers' expectations.
- Providing end to end services including coastal and short sea services in partnership with shipping lines and freight forwarders.

SUBSIDIARIES, JOINT VENTURES AND ALLIANCES:

Your Company has four Subsidiaries, one Associate and ten Joint Venture (JV) Companies. These alliances are in the fields of sea port operations, last mile connectivity, container freight stations, air cargo and cold chain logistics. These partnerships are positively contributing directly and indirectly to the performance of CONCOR.

The strategic alliances have been firmed up enabling the Company to expand its presence in all segments of logistics value chain of EXIM and domestic business.

There has been a substantial improvement in the performance of two subsidiaries of the Company namely SIDCUL CONCOR Infra Company Ltd. and Punjab Logistics Infrastructure Limited and they have now started generating profits. The impetus of the government for setting up new MMLPs, Ports, SEZs, etc. offers tremendous opportunities to your Company to be the partner in same through arrangements of mutual benefit.

While the existing Joint Ventures have continued to perform well, new strategic alliances are also being explored. During the year, MOUs were entered with Indian Oil Corporation Limited and Indraprastha Gas Limited (for LNG fuel), NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam Limited (for solar power), DB Schenker (for EXIM and Domestic Business) and Central Warehousing Corporation (for logistics solutions).

TECHNOLOGY AND STANDARDISATION:

The Company is always on the forefront to leverage technology for sustainable progress well ahead of its peers. The proactive investment in technology by the Company has paid off well. Your Company has robust system covering the following functions:

- The operations and financial functions are system driven and are integrated so that all business activities are smoothly carried out, recorded and reported on real time basis.
- Electronic filing of documents on commercial systems extended to all EXIM terminals.
- As a business continuity effort, disaster recovery site and provision of stand by systems at primary site for business-critical operations have been established.
- Human Resource Management System implemented for seamless delivery of all employee benefits and services and it is duly integrated with financial systems.
- Customer interface through dedicated web server helps in taking corrective actions on customer feedback and complaints.
- Use of mobile app for dissemination of information about public tariff and track & trace of containers.
- Implementation of AI based terminal management system contributing towards enhanced productivity, efficiency and customer centric services. Various other systems which are being used include paperless e-office environment, Know Your Container Location (KYCL), e-Contractor billing, e-tendering and First Mile Last Mile (FMLM) app, etc.

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:

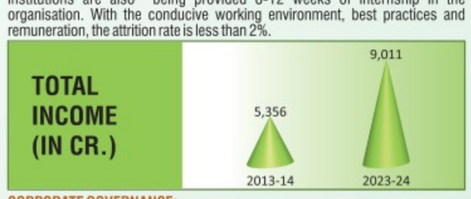
I agree with the quote of a well-known writer Robin Sharma that "**The bigger the dream, the more important the team.**"

Your Company is a progressive organisation and it firmly believes in the magic of team work. It is true that none of us is as smart as all of us. Thus, the thrust of your company is to capture the collective capabilities to triumph. The business of the Company is run professionally by talented team of 1286 CONCORians.

Right placement and refinement of employees is primary function after their induction and an alignment is maintained between individual performance and goals of the organisation. Appropriate training is provided through in-house and external programmes to improve the skills of the employees. The remuneration policies are in line with the DPE guidelines and the social security measures, in addition to gratuity and provident fund, include compassionate employment, post retirement pension and medical benefits.

Health and safety of employees is a priority and the company strives for a secure work-life balance for them. Employees' physical and mental health are fostered by offering facilities such as gym and yoga courses at the workplace. The company also encourages them to participate in sport activities such as marathons, cricket and badminton matches and other sport events.

With the objective of skilling our youth, students from various educational institutions are also being provided 8-12 weeks of internship in the organisation. With the conducive working environment, best practices and remuneration, the attrition rate is less than 2%.



CORPORATE GOVERNANCE:

Your Company is a Navratna Undertaking committed to promote and strengthen the standards of corporate governance by abiding with best principles of accountability, transparency, fairness and responsibility in all its activities. It has put in place the framework of best policies, practices, structure and ethics in the Organisation. The Company is committed to do things the right way which is ethical as well as compliant to all applicable legislations. In recognition of Company's adoption of best practices and compliance with various performance standards, DPE has rated your Company outstanding on Corporate Governance parameters.

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES:

Your Company has been conferred with several awards and accolades for its outstanding performance, some of these are:

- CONCOR ranked 248th on the "Fortune India 500" list of 2023.
- Conferred award of "Inland Container Depot & Rail Operator of the Year (Public)" during the 15th Edition of CONquest 2024 by EXIM India.
- Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) felicitated the Company for Outstanding Performance for achieving high Rail handling in FY 2022-23.
- Goldman Sachs has picked up CONCOR as one of important enabler companies for Hon'ble Prime Minister's ambitious Make in India program.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY & SUSTAINABILITY:

Here I would like to quote the father of our Nation Mahatma Gandhi who said - "Be the change that you wish to see in the world".

Inspired by this vision, your Company is committed for carrying out its business in a socially and environmentally responsible manner. It has put in place well-structured policy and procedures for implementing the projects under its CSR initiatives. It believes in the philosophy that the long-term sustainable growth can be achieved by balancing the needs of all stakeholders and contributing to the upliftment and well-being of the under-privileged sections of the community.

I want to read few lines from the book 'Kurukshetra' written by Rashtra Kavi Shri Ramdhari Singh Dinkar:

"सबको मुक्त प्रकाश चाहिए, सबको मुक्त समीरण,
बाधा रहित विकास, मुक्त आशंकाओं से जीवन।"

With these principles, the CSR initiatives during the year continued to be focused on overall development of the society with emphasis on health and nutrition activities in line with the guidelines of DPE. In addition, the CSR activities of the Company are also carried out in the areas of education, skill development, environment sustainability, sports, infrastructure development, etc. Through these initiatives, your Company has positively impacted the lives of large number of stakeholders in the country and the work done by it has been appreciated. During 2023-24, an amount of Rs. 17.31 crores have been spent on CSR, which inter-alia includes work in the following areas:

- Several activities in the field of health and education were carried out in Aspirational districts adopted by CONCOR i.e. Kandhamal (Odisha), Shravasti and Chandauli (Uttar Pradesh), Asifabad (Telangana) and Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh).
- 115 nos. of health camps were organised at major locations of CONCOR facilities, which benefitted approximately 50,000 stakeholders.
- Upliftment of 300 children and young women engaged in beggary by funding a campaign 'Bhiksha Nahi Shiksha' in Delhi.
- Improvement and up-gradation in 23 Rural Schools of Jalna District of Maharashtra, construction of classrooms in School at Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh and construction of Computer Training Centre at Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.
- Supported education of under-privileged students in Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Delhi benefitting 1,200 students.
- To promote Atmanirbhar Bharat mission, supported the skilling of 100 students in field of Business Process Management, Finance & Accounting at Tuticorin, Tamil Nadu.
- To promote women empowerment, provided skill development training to 240 women/ girls in the field of Tailoring and Make-up Artist at Tughlakabad, New Delhi.
- Installed 350 solar lights at Barabanki and Lucknow Districts, Uttar Pradesh.
- Development of sports infrastructure at Delhi and Bhojpur, Bihar.

As you know, MSMEs are a significant contributor to India's GDP and overall economic development. They are a major source of employment and a driving force behind the country's international trade. In recognition of their deep roots in local communities promoting grassroots-level economic prosperity, your company is continuously making efforts to work for development of MSMEs. In this direction, during year 46.45% of total input material was directly sourced from such producers.

To make our country atmanirbhar in container manufacturing, the Company took the lead by giving developmental orders in the beginning and has created an ecosystem for container manufacturing in the Country. Later regular orders on domestic manufactures were placed, who are now supplying containers.

To promote environment friendly mode of transportation, the Company has started its LNG fleet of 100 trucks for providing FMLM services. Further, looking at the performance of this fleet and its contributions to environment, the Company is in the process of placing orders for procurement of 200 more such LNG trucks.

WAY FORWARD:

India took 60 years to become a one trillion US$ economy and 12 years to add another two trillion US$. India's achieving 5th place in the World economy is remarkable at a time when most of the economies are facing slowdown. As per a forecast of IMF, by 2027 India is set to emerge the 3rd largest economy surpassing Japan and Germany.

The Company is fully convinced about the long term sustainable economic progress of our country posturing a bright prospect for logistics sector, which is the backbone for trade and commerce.

In the famous book '**The Wings of Fire**' by **Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam**, there is a quote, "To succeed in life and achieve results, you must understand and master three mighty forces – desire, belief and expectation."

The Company aims for the holistic growth not only in terms of profits but to bring positive changes in the society and environment and create sustainable value for all stakeholders.

I am sure that expansion of rail and road infrastructure, full commissioning of DFC, burgeoning e-commerce, expansion of infrastructure at existing sea ports, proposal to set up mega ports at Colachal, Tamil Nadu, Sagar, West Bengal, Durgarajapatnam, Andhra Pradesh and Vadhawan, Maharastra, Make in India push, rising trade, consumption, commencement of rupee bilateral trade with 19 countries, etc. will open new avenues for substantial growth in the logistics sector for which your Company is future ready.The Company with its strong capabilities of 66 terminals, 16,997 wagons, 44,492 containers, 108 RSTs, etc. is well geared up to retain its leadership position in the industry. Your company today is well positioned and committed to be partner in this progress of our country as a leader in the logistics sector with its motto of **Think Logistics, Think CONCOR**.

I firmly believe in a famous saying:

The best way to predict your future is to create it.

Our mission is to make CONCOR a Company of outstanding quality and to provide responsive, cost effective, efficient and reliable logistic solutions to customers and be their first choice. Your Company derives inspiration from its above mission to make it an institution of repute, competitive and champion of change.

Your Company is blessed to be in sunrise sector which is at the point of inflection of growth. With abundance of opportunities, strong balance sheet, conducive business environment and skilled team, I see a very bright future for your Company.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

Before concluding, I express my sincere appreciation to my fellow Board members for their valuable inputs and guidance. I wish to thank the Ministry of Railways, Shipping, Commerce and Industry, Finance and other Ministries, Departments of Customs, various State Governments, investors, JV partners, value chain partners, customers and regulators, with whose motivation and support, the Company has been flourishing.

I acknowledge and appreciate the guidance and valuable support of C&AG of India and our Auditors. I also extend my thanks to the electronic and print media for providing constructive coverage.

I would like to place on record my appreciation and heartfelt gratitude for team CONCOR for their outstanding performance and with their hard work and talent, your Company is well poised to attain new heights.

My Dear shareholders, a special thank to all of you for the faith and confidence reposed in the management. I look forward to your valuable support to us going forward. May God bless you all and our dear country always.

Jai Hind, Jai Bharat!

25th September, 2024
New Delhi

Sanjay Swarup
Chairman and Managing Director

Note: *This does not purport to be a record of the proceedings of the 36th Annual General Meeting of the Company.*

Green Logistics- LNG Powered Trucks

Warehouse & Distribution Logistics

AI Based Terminal Management System

66 Terminals including 16 MMLP's setup across the Country

First Mile Last Mile Service

CONTAINER CORPORATION OF INDIA LIMITED

(CIN: L63011DL1988GOI030915)

Regd. Office: CONCOR Bhawan, C-3, Mathura Road, Opp. Apollo Hospital, New Delhi-110076. **Corp. Office:** CONCOR Annexe., 3rd Floor, NSIC MDBP Building, Okhla Phase – III, Delhi -110020
Email: investorrelations@concorindia.com, Website: www.concorindia.co.in, Phone: 011-41222500/600/700

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Not afraid of Lokayukta probe: Chief Minister

I am determined to face everything. I will decide the next course of action after discussing with legal experts, says Siddaramaiah after a special court ordered an investigation into MUDA 'scam'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday said he was "not afraid" of the Lokayukta probe ordered by a Special Court for Elected Representatives in Bengaluru in the alleged Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) sites allotment scam.

The Chief Minister posted on X, "It has come to my attention through the media that the Special Court for Elected Representatives has ordered an investigation by the Mysuru Lokayukta. I will provide a detailed response after receiving the full copy of the order. I am ready to face the investigation and continue the legal fight. As I said yesterday, I repeat today: there is no question of fearing an investigation. I am determined to face everything. After discussing with legal experts, I will decide the next course of action."

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, speaking on the Lokayukta being asked to investigate the MUDA case, said, "We are confident that the Chief Minister is not involved in the case. If at all, officials may be at fault. I can confidently say that the Chief Minister will come out clean."

Confident: Chief Minister Siddaramaiah addressing the media on the Vidhana Soudha premises in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

> We are confident that the Chief Minister is not involved in the case. If at all, officials may be at fault. I can confidently say that the Chief Minister will come out clean.
>
> **D.K. SHIVAKUMAR,**
> Deputy Chief Minister

Asked about Prime Minister Narendra Modi raising the MUDA issue in an election rally in Haryana, he said, "Those who want to do politics will do politics. There is a difference between politics and law."

On protests by the BJP demanding Mr. Siddaramaiah's resignation, he said, "Investigations are going on against Union Ministers in many cases. Aren't they continuing in power? Take their resignation first and then demand the Chief Minister's resignation."

'Not satisfied'

Earlier in the day, Home Minister G. Parameshwara said, "We have not got justice and the judgment is not satisfactory."

Speaking to reporters in Bengaluru, Dr. Parameshwara said while advocates were placing the arguments in the case, the judge had specifically asked the counsels to present the role of the Chief Minister in the alleged MUDA scam. But, in the ruling, the role of the Chief Minister is not specifically mentioned. The judgment should have explained his role, the Minister said.

Dr. Parameshwara ruled out the resignation of Mr. Siddaramaiah. "The Chief Minister will discuss the matter with the legal team and take a call on approaching a Division Bench, and further the Supreme Court," he said.

BJP leaders to protest demanding resignation of Siddaramaiah

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Building pressure on Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to resign in the wake of a Special Court ordering a Lokayukta probe into the alleged irregularities in the allotment of sites to his wife, Opposition BJP leaders have decided to stage a protest in front of Mahatma Gandhi's statue in Bengaluru on Thursday.

Incumbent and former MPs and MLAs are set to take part in the protest that will be led by party State president B.Y. Vijayendra and Leaders of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council R. Ashok and Chalavadi Narayanaswamy, respectively.

Announcing this at a press conference here on Wednesday, Mr. Ashok said they would also demand a CBI probe into alleged irregularities in MUDA and Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation. "How can the Lokayukta police conduct an inquiry against Mr. Siddaramaiah if he continues to hold the post of Chief Minister?" he asked.

Stepping up pressure: BJP State unit president B.Y. Vijayendra at a press conference in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

Referring to the Special Court of Sessions for Criminal Cases against Former and Present MLAs and MPs on Wednesday ordering a probe by the Lokayukta against these alleged irregularities, he said at least now the Chief Minister should quit.

At a separate press conference, Mr. Vijayendra suggested to the Chief Minister to protect his honour by voluntarily stepping down and pave the way for an impartial probe.

Mr. Vijayendra played an old video clip in which Mr. Siddaramaiah, who was then the Leader of the Opposition, had asked his father, B.S. Yediyurappa, who was the Chief Minister, to step down and pave the way for a free and fair probe by the Lokayukta. He urged Mr. Siddaramaiah to follow his own suggestion now.

Modi refers to MUDA issue

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

At an Assembly election rally in Haryana's Sonipat, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday referred to the alleged MUDA scam.

He said wherever the Congress was in power, be it in Karnataka, Telangana or in Rajasthan earlier, its top leaders, were busy fighting among themselves, sparing little thought for the people's problems and issues.

Corruption charge

Corruption "Wherever the Congress sets foot, one thing is for sure: corruption, corruption, and corruption," said Mr. Modi, adding that in less than two years the Karnataka Chief Minister was facing charges of a land scam.

CM should quit in terms of propriety: Hegde

The Hindu Bureau
MANGALURU

Former Lokayukta N. Santosh Hegde has said Chief Minister Siddaramaiah should resign over the Karnataka High Court's verdict in connection with the MUDA case "in terms of propriety", even though legally there is nothing wrong if he does not.

'Left to the individual'

Talking to reporters in Mangaluru on Wednesday, Mr. Hegde said, "Whether to resign or not is left to the individual."

He recalled the then Railway Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri resigning owning moral responsibility for the Ariyalur railway accident in 1956. "You will not see such actions now," he said.

He further said, "I hope the agency that will investigate the case will discharge its duty in a just and diligent manner."

On the prospect of the single judge's order being challenged before a Divisional Bench of the High Court, Mr. Hegde said, "Seeing the observations made by the judge, it is highly unlikely that Mr. Siddaramaiah will get a favourable order in higher courts," he said.

Man who surrendered to police to protect accused in Darshan case gets bail

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka has granted bail to a 27-year-old man who had surrendered to the police, in place of the actual accused, by accepting ₹5 lakh as consideration for owning up the offence in the Renukaswamy murder case; film actor Darshan is a main accused in the case.

Justice S. Vishwajith Shetty passed the order while allowing the petition filed by Keshavamurthy, a resident of Girinagar in Bengaluru, who has been arraigned as accused no. 16 in the chargesheet.

This is the first instance of bail granted to any of the accused in the actor's case by the High Court since registration of crime on June 9, 2024.

The court noted that the petitioner was accused of committing the offences only under Sections 120B (criminal conspiracy), 143, 147 and 149 (a member of unlawful assembly) and 201 (causing disappearance of evidence of offence, or giving false information, to screen offender).

It has been alleged in the chargesheet that the petitioner, who was having some financial issue, was offered ₹5 lakh by another accused in the case and was asked to surrender to the police along with three other accused persons to protect the actual accused.

The court directed the petitioner to appear regularly on all the dates of hearing before the trial court unless the trial court exempts his appearance for valid reasons; not to directly or indirectly threaten or tamper with the prosecution witnesses; not involve in similar offences in future, and not leave the jurisdiction of the trial court without permission of that court.

KPSC told to follow UPSC model in recruitment

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Decision comes in the wake of malpractices reported in the State public service commission during the recruitment process

With many malpractices reported during the recruitment process of the Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC), the State government has decided to adopt the model followed by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) to ensure transparency in the recruitment of gazetted and non-gazetted posts.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who chaired a meeting on the progress of recruitment in various departments and under Article 371J on Wednesday, instructed senior officials to adopt the model followed by UPSC. The causes for the delay in recruitment, loopholes in recruitment process and other issues were discussed.

Avoid clash of dates

He directed officials to ensure that all departments issue notifications on vacancies at a time and release the timetable for conducting the exam and announcement of results. They were told to avoid clash of dates of examinations conducted by other departments of the State and Central governments.

Issues related to recruitments in the Kalyana Karnataka region under Article 371J were discussed and officials told to bring the issues raised by the Cabinet sub-committee before the Cabinet. Several Ministers, including Home Minister G. Parameshwara, attended the meeting.

Already the Administrative Reforms Commission has recommended reforms in government recruitment.

RGUHS campus to be relocated to Ramanagara in a phased manner

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The State government has decided to relocate the Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences (RGUHS) campus to Ramanagara in a phased manner by November 2025. The process will begin with moving of offices in a month. The decision was taken during a meeting on Wednesday chaired by Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar along with Medical Education Minister Sharan Prakash Patil, Housing Minister B.Z. Zameer Ahmed Khan, M.K. Ramesh, Vice-Chancellor of RGUHS.

At a press conference after the meeting, Mr. Shivakumar said, "The land acquisition issues for the campus at Ramanagara are being resolved, and the construction work is in progress. Necessary infrastructure is being provided to start a medical college in Ramanagara. I have suggested shifting the administrative office of the RGUHS to Ramanagara," he said.

Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences in Bengaluru. FILE PHOTO

The land acquisition issues for the campus at Ramanagara are being resolved, and the construction work is in progress, says Shivakumar

Kanakapura medical college

Mr. Shivakumar spoke about the setting up of a medical college in Kanakapura as announced in the Budget. "The land will be acquired from the Karnataka Housing Board, and the building will be constructed. The NMC rejected the application on the grounds that there was no infrastructure in Kanakapura. Therefore, it has been decided to enhance the infrastructure and submit a fresh application for approval of the NMC," Mr. Shivakumar added.

He said earlier, tenders were called for the construction of a medical college in Kanakapura and the foundation laying ceremony was done. "However, the college sanctioned to Kanakapura was shifted to Chickballapur because of vendetta politics by then BJP Minister K. Sudhakar. The construction cost of the medical college, which was then ₹450 crore, has increased to ₹850 crore now," he said.

Meanwhile, the government has sought to use RGUHS funds to set up the medical college in Kanakapura.

"University fund is also government money," Mr. Shivakumar said. However, university officials said they will have to place it before the Syndicate, which will take the final call on the issue.

Bone marrow transplants touch 100 mark at Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology

Afshan Yasmeen
BENGALURU

The State-run Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology (KMIO) has touched a milestone by taking up 100 bone marrow transplants (BMTs), including eight allogeneic transplants, since April 2022, giving tough competition to private hospitals in Bengaluru.

Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology and Hospital in Bengaluru. FILE PHOTO

100th under way

The institute has India's largest State-run BMT unit with a 14-bed facility, including an intensive care unit. While 99 transplants have been completed, the 100th procedure, an autologous stem cell transplant in an adult patient, is under way. The entire transplant process takes about 20-24 days for completion, doctors said.

The stem cells in autologous transplants come from the same person who will get the transplant, so the patient is their donor. Whereas, the stem cells in allogeneic transplants are from a person other than the patient, either a matched related or unrelated donor.

The institute had successfully conducted its first autologous stem cell transplantation on an eight-year-old boy from Tumakuru in the newly built BMT unit in April 2022, said Kidwai administration Naveen Bhat Y. The patient, Jeevan Kumar, had been diagnosed with Refractory Hodgkins Lymphoma, S4, and the transplantation was done on April 28, 2022, in the new BMT unit that was inaugurated on February 15 that year, on the occasion of International Childhood Cancer Day.

The first paediatric matched sibling donor allogeneic BMT was done on June 12 in a 14-year-old girl who was suffering from acute myeloid leukaemia (a type of blood cancer). Her transplant was done under the Employees' State Insurance (ESI) scheme of her mother, a garment factory worker.

The girl's cancer was resistant to conventional chemotherapy, and she had a very high chance of relapse. Luckily for this teenager, her younger brother was a complete genetic match (12/12 HLA match) and the transplant was successfully done on June 12.

With the cost of autologous transplants in private hospitals ranging from ₹7 lahk to ₹15 lakh and allogeneic BMTs about ₹12 lahk to ₹15 lahks, the demand for affordable BMTs in Kidwai has increased. These procedures cost around ₹4 lahk and ₹10 lahk, respectively, at Kidwai. Doctors said nearly 18 more patients have been lined up for transplant at the institute.

As BMT is not included in the State's health schemes such as Ayushman Bharat Arogya Karnataka, the institute has been providing these life-saving procedures almost free of cost to patients by utilising the Prime Minister's Relief Fund, the Chief Minister's Relief Fund, SCP/TSP scheme, ESI, and CGHS schemes.

Post-op challenges

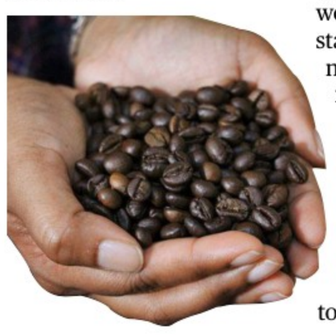
Dr. Bhat said as almost all patients availing of services at Kidwai are from low socio-economic backgrounds, post-transplant care is a challenge for them.

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
FISHERIES AND FISHERMEN WELFARE DEPARTMENT
Fishing Harbour Project Circle, Chennai - 600035
E-TENDER FOR CONTRACT: RATE TENDER SYSTEM - LUMPSUM CONTRACT
(TWO COVER SYSTEM)
E - SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE NO: 06/DB/F.114N/2024, DATED : 25.09.2024
For and On behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu, e-Tender is invited by the Chief Engineer, Fishing Harbour Project Circle, Fisheries and Fishermen Welfare Department, Chennai from the eligible Registered Contractors of Fisheries and Fishermen Welfare Department, W.R.D & PWD., for the Six works through online.
1) Tender Documents available at website **from 26.09.2024, 5.00 P.M onwards to 14.10.2024, 05.00 PM**
2) The Last date of submission of tender through **online at 14.10.2024, 05.00 PM**
3) Date and Time of Opening of the **E-Tender 15.10.2024, 05.00 PM**
The tender documents, Approximate value of work, EMD details, Period of contract, Eligibility of contractor and other details will be available at through online in the Government website **https://tntenders.gov.in** and it can be downloaded free of cost & For further details and In case of any Changes / Corrections/Amendments/ Corrigendum in the tender/tender notice, It will be intimated in the above website only.
DIPR/3920/TENDER/2024
Chief Engineer,
Fishing Harbour Project Circle, Chennai-35

Brewed in Bengaluru: Cothas Coffee @ 75

As the company enters the next leg of its journey, the brand that has become a household name by now seems to be gearing up to take its ambitions beyond the seas

Shilpa Elizabeth
BENGALURU



Slurping coffee from a saucer has been an age-old practice in many south Indian homes, but did you know that it has more to it than just cooling the coffee down?

"It's a science to taste the coffee," says Nitin C.S., Managing Partner at Bengaluru's own coffee brand, Cothas Coffee.

"When you slurp the coffee, you aerate the liquid that's going in. It hits the palette at the back of your tongue and the flavour just bursts open in your mouth."

Nitin, who follows a strict diet to ensure his palette can tell the right notes of coffee, is third generation at the home-grown coffee brand that is completing 75 years.

As the company enters the next leg of its journey, Cothas Coffee that has become a household name by now seems to be gearing up to take its ambitions beyond the seas.

Humble beginnings

The aroma of freshly roasted coffee beans fills the air at the Cothas Coffee factory in Jigani.

Behind the large desk in the chairman's room, C.K. Sreenathan, managing partner and second generation of the family business, seems relaxed as he is about to narrate the story of the company which was born the same year as he did.

"My father started the business in 1949," he begins tersely. "We were a very large family where his sister and parents also stayed with us. Jewellery used to be our main business, but my grandfather relinquished it to his brothers. Since then, my father wanted to do some business on his own."

For a while, Krishnaiah Chetty - father of Sreenathan - did some contract work for the army. Later he started his own coffee business and gave it his family name. "C(K)otha in Telugu means new," explains Sreenathan's son Nitin, whose roots trace back to Andhra Pradesh. His great-grandfather was one of the first people in the family to relocate to Bengaluru.

"When the ancestors moved here, we were called the *Kothavalu* or 'new people' in the community. That became the family name and later the brand name."

Early growth

Chetty opened his first store in Dharmaraja Koil Street in Shivajinagar, which later moved to another location on the same street near Russell Market. The second shop near Meenakshi Koil Street followed soon. At home, coffee became an everyday conversation and a large looming presence.

"We had no choice," Sreenathan laughs. Typical of a conventional family business, everybody - from children to adults - helped out. Sreenathan was still in school when his two elder brothers joined the business.

In 1968, the family opened its third store in Kempegowda Road. While the business was growing, a problem cropped up. The process was not centralized.

Each store had a small roasting machine, which meant coffee was roasted, ground, packed and sold separately in each store. This made it difficult to maintain the same quality across all three shops.

Centralisation

"I have heard stories of people saying they liked the coffee in a certain store, but not so much in another store and so on. Bangalore was a small city then where word spread fast, and everybody knew everything about such nuances," Nitin recollects.

In early 1971, Sreenathan started helping out at the Kempegowda Road store after completing his studies at Regional Engineering College, Trichy. He was the first engineer in the family. Meanwhile, the family opened the fourth store in Malleswaram.

Sreenathan started making frequent trips to Germany with the idea of bringing in machinery and technology to integrate with the business back at home.

"He loved technology and machines. The thought process was that if we had to grow, it couldn't be done by opening more stores. Because in those days, the family ran the stores and there were no people to run more stores. That's when the idea of a factory and a centralised roasting machine to ensure common quality across all stores came in," Nitin says.

Cothas Coffee's first big roasting machine from Germany was installed in its first factory in JP Nagar in the 1970s. More machines followed later.

"Then there was no looking back. We knew coffee since birth and now we were well versed in technology too," Sreenathan says.

Spreading wings

While the four shops continue to run even today, manufacturing moved to the factory. A distribution network that supplied Cothas Coffee powder, within the city initially and later to other cities, formed around it. In another five years, the company had its second factory, and its products started appearing in most grocery shops and supermarkets in Bengaluru.

"In Bangalore approximately there are about 20,000 grocery stores. Our products are there in at least 16,000 of them," Sreenathan estimates.

The company, which grew from a neighbourhood coffee store to a South Indian coffee brand, today exports its products to the U.S., Australia, Middle East and Central Asia. The exports constitute about 5% of the business.

The art of sourcing

Holding a few beans in his cupped hands, Sreenathan weighs them, shakes them and makes some observations to those around him. The art of assessing coffee, by now, is second nature to the family.

"Each one in the family was trained to tell between good and bad coffee. Initially, each had their own ways. One would pick up the beans, shake them in their palms, and listen to the noise the beans made. For some others, it was the way the beans danced in their palm. Another person would see if it cracks with the first bite," Nitin describes.

"Eventually, the ways matured. Like how you do wine tasting, we also started tasting coffee. We brew it, slurp it... there's a little bit of science and art in how it's done," says Nitin.

According to statistics by Coffee Board of India, Karnataka is the highest coffee producing state in India constituting more than 70% of the total coffee production in the country. It is followed by Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Ebb and flow

Cothas coffee sources its Robusta and Arabica varieties from Chikmagalur and Kodagu, and occasionally from Wayanad. A sample is brewed in the company lab, slurped in black, one spool full of it. Given coffee is only one harvest a year if a sample is found to fit the profile, the lot is bought immediately and stored.

While the brand and its business has grown consistently more or less, it has had its own share of challenges too.

"It was a little difficult journey during 1973-78 because imports were not easily allowed at that time,' Sreenathan recollects. This was when the company was looking to import machines for its factory.

There were difficulties related to sourcing as well. "Earlier sourcing was controlled by the Coffee Board of India. They would auction the coffee and we could only buy from them. Later the market was opened in 1996. But then the challenge was that many of the sellers started quoting much higher prices," says Nitin.

Taxation was yet another issue. "Different taxations for coffee separately and coffee mixed with chicory posed hurdles. At one point of time, it was under central excise, then it came into state tax, then VAT came into play."

"Being a tea-drinking country, any bit of increase in the cost of the product immediately makes the consumer sway towards another hot beverage. So, this was a concern," Nitin notes.

Sreenathan's elder brothers and nephew left the company in 2009 and 2014. However, a feud broke out between the brothers in the following years as they attempted to launch a new brand with a moniker similar to Cothas. The court later passed orders protecting the Cothas Coffee brand.

Onwards and upwards

Sreenathan, however, seems to have taken it all in stride. "If you have a nose, one day you'll catch a cold," he quips.

Cothas Coffee today employs around 650 people, has around 60 stores across South India, and claims to serve 3 million cups of coffee every day.

Rather than remaining a household name, the company has put in additional efforts in the last 10 years to capture the out-of-home market. Apart from supplying to big hotel chains, offices and small showrooms, it has introduced vending solutions and ventured into ready-to-drink cold coffee varieties and decoctions over the last few years.

Says Nithin, "For the 75th year, we want to venture into instant coffees. Since it's a special year, we would also like to close it with a nice number. We plan to have 100 stores by the end of this financial year. We also hope to open our first international store in Dubai by the end of this year."

Cothas Coffee sources its Robusta and Arabica varieties from Chikkamagaluru and Kodagu, and occasionally from Wayanad.

The packaging process in Cothas Coffee factory.

One of the Cothas Coffee stores in Bengaluru.

Nitin C.S. and C.K. Sreenathan

Behind the scenes with Rambo Circus, now performing in Bengaluru

In the era of social media, things have not been getting easier for circus artistes who try to continue putting up their best performances

Ipsita Misra
BENGALURU

Founded in 1991, Rambo Circus has been entertaining its audiences for more than three decades now. The troupe has witnessed a seachange within and outside during this period.

The internationally famous circus troupe would be in Bengaluru till October 31 to amuse the audience with their mastery in clowning, lasso wielding, juggling, and hula hoops, among other things. The shows are being organised by Bangalore Media Centre (BMC).

While the troupe continues to attract crowds, in the era of social media, smaller screens and reduced attention spans, things have not been getting easier for the artists who try to continue putting up their best performances amid challenges.

Clown artist Rajiv Chatterjee in the green room.

Circus artiste Roshni Terangpi wielding a lasso.

Many challenges

"I have been with Rambo Circus for the last 18 years," says Rajiv Chatterjee, clown artiste with Rambo Circus. "During COVID, things got really difficult for us. We used to have about 300 artists. During COVID the number dropped down to 100." The troupe is staging their shows in Kengeri due to the easy metro and bus connectivity. There are three shows per day, at 1 p.m., 4 p.m., and 7 p.m., and audiences travel from as far as Mysuru to watch the show that has been going on in the city for the last 10 days. Nevertheless, in recent years, circus troupes have reported seeing decreased audience, especially as videos of the tricks performed by circus artists are available on social media platforms now.

"With the audience numbers for circuses dwindling, we want to give people a glimpse into the life of circus artists so that they come and watch our shows," says Vishwas B.H., a collaborator at BMC.

Pinning hopes on audience

During the performance, the troupe puts up an assortment of tricks with expertise. The clowns call in children to join in the fun as they perform, while gymnasts perform exercises that appear impossible to the common eye. "It can take up to one year for us to master the tricks that appear so natural," says Chatterjee.

Many artistes, coming from extreme poverty, joined the circus at an extremely young age to support their families and stayed away from home for long periods. Take the case of Roshni Terangpi, a 28-year-old lasso wielder who hails from Assam and joined the circus right after finishing class 12.

Some of them have got opportunities to perform on the silver screen as well.

"I have performed with Akshay Kumar in *Atrangi Re*, and with Alia Bhatt and Ranveer Singh as well," says Terangpi. "What I enjoy most about performing is the audience clapping along and having fun," she adds

Chatterjee is hopeful that the patrons would not let the troupe hang on to a trapeze and struggle for survival. As he gets ready for the first show of the day, he is optimistic. "We never let the audience get bored. Our aim is to help them enjoy the show so much so that they do not realise the passage of time. Only when you are here, you'd see how fun this is. So come and enjoy our shows, and bring your children too."

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO SEPTEMBER 26, 1974

Agitation Plan for Reintroduction of Prohibition

Bangalore, Sept 25. The State-level Prohibition Committee has decided to launch an agitation for re-introduction of Prohibition.

Satyagrahis have been trained for the agitation and a second training camp for the satyagrahis would shortly be inaugurated by Mrs. Yashodara Dasappa, a former Minister of the State. "Sardar" Venkataramiah, the convenor of the committee, told a news conference here to-day that a voters' council could be formed to fight for it in the coming elections.

He said that a State-level conference on Prohibition would be held next month and that they have decided to invite the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to inaugurate it.

The President of the Bangalore City Prohibition Committee, Mr T.R. Shamanna, said that a silent procession would be taken out from the Gandhi statue on Mahatma Gandhi Road on October 2 by the volunteers of the committee and that after going through the main thoroughfares of the city, the processionists would submit copies of a memorandum to the Governor at the Raj Bhavan and to the Chief Minister.

Bright, bold and beautiful Veena Kulkarni (below left) with Sanam Dembla, scenes from previous editions of Maya Bazaar. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Five years and counting

Maya Bazaar is back in Bengaluru this weekend with their fifth edition

Ruth Dhanaraj

Maya Bazaar, Bengaluru's annual celebration of diversity and acceptance is back with its fifth edition, and is taking it a notch higher by including persons with disabilities (PwD) and the Dalit, Bahujan, and Adivasi (DBA) communities this year.

"Since we talk the language of the marginalised, the Bazaar has organically drawn in the intersectionalities of different identities. There are now people with disabilities, Dalit, Bahujan, Adivasi, and others from different communities ," says co-founder Veena Kulkarni, elaborating on how they have moved from the LGBTQ+ tag to, "Pride Meets Purpose from all marginalised communities to the world."

Founders Sanam Dembla and Veena Kulkarni say this fifth edition is a special one for them. "We started off on a lark, wanting to contribute to the economy in a fun way and get our brands out there. Back then, we did not think we would become this big," says Veena, admitting, the journey has been a challenging one. "We wear our politics on our sleeve, so it has not been the easiest thing to achieve."

"The idea for Maya Bazaar started on a cricket ground, where a couple of us from the LGBTQ community came up with the idea for a space where we could be ourselves, do business and have some fun around around it," says Sanam Dembla.

"There is a lot of creativity within the community and there was a need for a platform to showcase it," she adds.

Sanam drew on her experiences in the events background and the duo settled on Goa as the venue for their first show in 2020 . "This was soon after the initial lockdown and many people were working from holiday destinations. The response was great – we had about 40 entrepreneurs from all over the country and around 700 visitors in two days."

For both Sanam and Veena, the unabashed and unexpected acceptance they received from both millennials and senior citizens, clinched the deal for them.

"We felt we were on the right track, and realised we had so much more to offer. The Bazaar had the potential to sustain an economy on its own, so we began pushing entrepreneurship as well," says Sanam.

The choice for their second edition was Shimla as it was a holiday destination too. "However, it was quite homophobic there and we certainly pushed boundaries," she says, adding that though they were welcomed by government officials, they did not get too many visitors.

"When we finally had our third edition in Bangalore, the response was four times bigger with 120 stalls and artistes coming down from Mumbai, Delhi and Goa. We registered about 4,000 visitors," Sanam says.

"Now, for our upcoming fifth edition, we have 150 stores of whom 30-40% are repeat entrepreneurs. We have begun to consider the possibility of holding the Bazaar twice a year," says Veena.

This edition of the Bazaar will host India's biggest queer musical on stage. "It is titled *The Baaja Company* and has been directed by Mujeeb Pasha. This small home production is a fun, 40-minute piece about queer lives and is loosely based on Ismat Chugtai's book *Lihaaf*," says Veena, whose preferred pronouns are they/them.

"Pride Meets Purpose from all marginalised communities to the world – that is what is special this year. We are hoping for more representation and a lot of learning as well. There's a lot to absorb at an event like this," they add.

Sanam adds that concepts such as gender-neutral washrooms can be an eye opener.

"We all come from our own spaces of difficulty. During these two days, we can leave them aside, have a good time and not apologise for being ourselves," adds Veena, "And every year, we too learn how to make this space more safe for people to be who they are without any fear."

One of the highlights of this year is the walk-through by parents at the Bazaar. "This year, there will be an opening at four pm by the parents of queer folks who are going to walk the pride with us and announce the show open," says Sanam.

Veena adds, "It's a symbolic opening as the bazaar opens at 11. Every year, someone from the trans community or queer veterans walk through the bazaar with the pride flag. People join in with music and dancing, with the procession coming to a halt at the stage."

"This year, it will be the parents of not only queer folk, but also everyone from our team, volunteers and stall owners. A lot of parents visit the Bazaar; this time, we are inviting them to lead the pride and be our guests of honor."

Maya Bazaar has always been a pet-friendly event and the stalls this year will offer a diverse range of garments, accessories, home décor and other products, as well as workshops, activities and performances, by queer, women, and ally-owned businesses.

Maya Bazaar will be held at Jayamahal Palace Hotel Grounds on September 28 and 29, from 10am-10pm. Tickets on allevents.in. Log on to www.mayabazaar-.co.in for more details.

CITYBEATS

Dasara delights

ONGOING
If stuck for gifting options this festive season, the Grand Rajasthani Exhibition has handlooms, handicrafts, jewellery and home decor as well as Sharanpur wood carvings, marble artefacts, Lucknow seikan carvings and more.
At Sri Someshwara Sabha Bhavana, RBI Layout, Kothanur and JP Nagar till September end. Call 89518 99961 for details.

Cycle of strength

SEPTEMBER 28
This is a workshop for women, organised by Tagda Raho in collaboration with Proactive For Her. It focuses on the benefits of syncing your workout with your menstrual cycle and will be led by Tagda Raho's expert coaches with Anuja, a women's health physiotherapist.
At Tagda Raho, Ulsoor, 10am onwards. Visit @tagdaraho on Instagram for details.

Sketch a strip

SEPTEMBER 28
This one is for children who enjoy telling a story and are lost in a world of animated characters, stories about dinosaurs, fairies and superheroes. Writer Ritu Ailani will conduct a workshop on how to create your own comic strip.
Fee is ₹899 per person on BookMyShow. At Atta Galatta, Indiranagar, 5pm onwards.

Saris for all seasons

Ruth Dhanaraj

Vastrabharana, the annual flagship event of the Crafts Council of Karnataka, is back with a seasonal theme. This year, the exhibition and sale of handcrafted textiles revolves around the five seasons of India.

According to Padmaja Sakamuri, co-ordinator of the event, each season has its own palette and signature motifs.

"Even though we told the artisans this was the theme, it was not mandatory; we handpicked colours and designs from their collections which we felt echoed the hues of spring, summer, autumn and monsoon," says Padmaja, admitting that winter was in the minority as its rather dull shades didn't do much for the show.

"Vastrabhrana is held every year around October 2 and it was predominantly for textiles – saris and yardage. Over the years, we've added a few stalls for jewellery, ready-to-wear clothes and readymade blouses, due to the rising demand," she says.

"This is our 32nd edition and our aim is to keep the tradition of sari weaving and sari wearing alive, especially among the younger generation. That is why we've always focused on the various textiles found around the country," says Padmaja. She adds that of the 54 stalls in this edition, four are for jewellery – lac bangles and Kailash patwa threadwork from Rajastan, and silver and designer jewellery respectively.

A touch of class Some of the fabrics and textiles on display at Vastrabharana. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The usual luxury weaves such as Chanderi, Benarsi, Kanjeevaram, Paithani, Zari Kotas and Patolas will be featured along with dye and block print favourites like Shibori, Bandhani, Bagru and more, as well as Chikankari, Kashmiri, Phulkari, Aari and other embroidered works.

Miho Sakata Malhan from Japan, will hold a short talk at the inaugural function on the influence of Indian weaves on Japanese traditional wear.

"Miho has kimonos and obis made from Indian fabrics in her possession. However since they are vintage pieces, they will only be on display for the duration of her talk," says Padmaja.

Vastrabharana will be held from September 27 to October 1 at Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath, from 10am-7.30pm. Entry free.

More than drama Stills from rehearsals, Feisal Alkazi (below). SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Gorky on stage

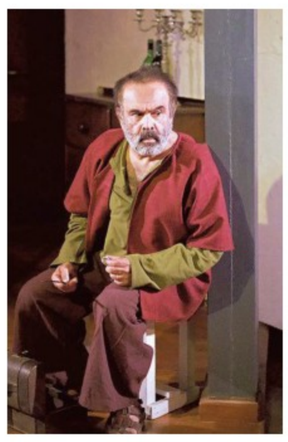
Shilpa Anandraj

The play, *The Lower Depths*, written by the Russian playwright Maxim Gorky and Stephanie Jacob's *Again*, will be staged in Bengaluru at Ranga Shankara this weekend. Both are directed by Feisal Alkazi.

"Gorky's plays are timeless masterpieces delving into the themes of despair, hope and resilience," says Feisal over a call from Delhi. "*Again* is a comedy exploring the intricacies of family life. *The Lower Depths* is set before the Russian Revolution and draws from Gorky's first-hand experience of poverty and social injustice."

An educationist, social activist and author, who has been at the helm of Indian theatre for over five decades with over 300 productions Feisal founded the Ruchika Theatre Group, in 1972 in Delhi.

Again, Feisal says, follows a once close-knit family of four who reunite after years of estrangement. "This time, they are determined to make things right, but as old wounds surface and unspoken truths come to light, tensions rise. The family's history, built up over time like layers of sedimentary rock, is revealed through contradictory memories and unsaid words."



With actors aged between 18 and 84, Feisal says, tried to retain the pre-Russian revolution world in *The Lower Depths*. "It has been an immersive process and the play is a rich production."

The set for *The Lower Depths,* Feisal says, is a *haveli* in Old Delhi. "It is a building from the 1870s with huge stone walls covered in moss." *Again*, Feisal says cannot be described as a happy play. "It does have a few lighter moments and was a more challenging play to work with. I literally had to smash my head over this one."

The son of theatre director and teacher, Ebrahim Alkazi, Feisal says, his father has been a huge influence on him. "I did not go to a formal acting school. I learnt by acting in plays and working with my father, learning so much from his rehearsals that we called it the 'Alkazi Gharana'! We see this in the classical arts where the child follows his parent's footsteps or in films with the Kapoors."

With seven directors in his family, all involved in theatre in one way or the other, Feisal says, "It has been beautiful to belong to a river such as this. I am passing it all on to my children. I never felt I was Ebrahim's son while working in theatre. In fact, my father did not came for rehearsals. He would watch the rehearsals later and give his feedback, which was a nice way of nurturing our passion in theatre."

As an educationist, Feisal says, "Some schools take theatre in education seriously. I visit Chennai often to direct plays for schools. The entire school gets involved. Participation is the first step. For one show, the audience started clapping non-stop and these are the moments that will stay on with the child."

When working with children, Feisal says he makes sure every child gets a chance. "Theatre is fundamental to education. In my experience, working with children and youth, also helps them in role play."

When asked, why is theatre bolder in talking about socio-political issues while cinema, which has more reach tends to shy away from such topics, Feisal says, "Theatre is a primal and intimate personal experience. The relation between the audience and the actor on stage cannot be recreated anywhere else. In theatre, I ask, 'This has happened to me, has it happened to you too?' The whole point of theatre is to hold a mirror to the audience. In all my years in theatre, that is what we have kept in mind."

The Lower Depths will be staged on September 27 at 7.30pm, on September 28 at 3.30pm and 7.30pm, at Ranga Shankara. Tickets on BookMyShow and at the venue.

INBRIEF

Actor Siddique moves SC for bail; Kerala govt. files caveat

Even as actor Siddique approached the Supreme Court seeking anticipatory bail in a sexual assault case, the Kerala government filed a caveat before the court seeking to hear its arguments before passing any order on the Special Leave Petition of the actor. The government, in its petition filed on Wednesday, said there was every chance that the actor would file an anticipatory petition in the top court as the Kerala High Court had dismissed his bail plea. The State sought to hear it before passing any order on the actor's petition.

Edavela Babu held in sexual assault case, released on bail

Edavela Babu, actor and former general secretary of the Association of Malayalam Movie Artistes (AMMA), has become the second prominent figure from the Malayalam film industry to be arrested by the special investigation team (SIT) in a sexual assault case in the wake of the K. Hema Committee report. His arrest was recorded on Wednesday after three hours of interrogation in Kochi. Mr. Babu was released as he had already been granted anticipatory bail in the case.

Woman actor moves Kerala HC for anticipatory bail

The film actor who has filed complaints of sexual harassment against actor and CPI(M) MLA Mukesh and other actors, including Jayasurya, Maniyanpilla Raju, and Edavela Babu, on Wednesday approached the Kerala High Court seeking anticipatory bail as she fears possible arrest in "an unknown crime" involving a non-bailable offence registered against her.

Stop making 'casual' remarks in court that reveal communal or gender biases, SC tells judges

'You cannot call any part of the territory of India 'Pakistan'... This is fundamentally wrong,' the CJI observed, referring to videos of a Karnataka HC judge referring to a part of Bengaluru as 'Pakistan'

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said a Karnataka High Court judge's reference to a Muslim-dominated part of Bengaluru as 'Pakistan' was "fundamentally wrong under the Constitution", while warning judges against making "casual observations" revealing communal bias or misogynism during judicial proceedings live-streamed across the country.

A five-judge Special Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud was hearing a *suo motu* case on video clips featuring Justice V. Srishananda's 'Pakistan' remark, and sexist banter addressed to a woman lawyer, during two separate judicial proceedings on June 6 and August 28, respectively.

"You cannot call any part of the territory of India 'Pakistan'... This is fundamentally wrong under the Constitution," Chief Justice Chandrachud said orally.

The top court emphasised that judges must strictly adhere to the values of the Constitution rather than make misogynistic or prejudicial comments unrelated to the case in hand. The Bench preferred to pass its judicial order in open court despite advice from Attorney General R. Venkataramani and Solicitor General Tushar Mehta to opt for an in-house procedure. Both law officers were apprehensive that the observations made in the Supreme Court hearing during the *suo motu* proceedings would be later misrepresented on social media.

"The answer to sunlight is more sunlight. The answer is not to close our doors and shut out everything," Chief Justice Chandrachud responded. The Bench, in its order, said casual, off-the-cuff remarks by judges would not only show them in a negative light but impact the entire judicial institution adversely.

"Casual observations may reflect individual bias, particularly if they are directed at a particular community or gender," the Bench underscored.

Chief Justice Chandrachud said the judiciary, lawyers and litigants, especially those who appear in court as petitioners-in-person, need to exercise restraint in their language and conduct. They have to realise that it was not just the people physically present in the courtroom who were watching them. The demands of the electronic age required them to practice modulation during court proceedings accessible to the outer world through videoconferencing and live-streaming, the CJI said.

The court closed the proceedings against Justice Srishananda on noting that he had made a "contrite apology" in open court on September 21, the day after the Supreme Court took *suo motu* cognisance of the video clips.

"Bearing in mind the contrite apology tendered by the judge in open court proceedings, we consider it in the interest of justice and keeping in mind the dignity of the institution to not pursue this matter further," the Supreme Court ordered.

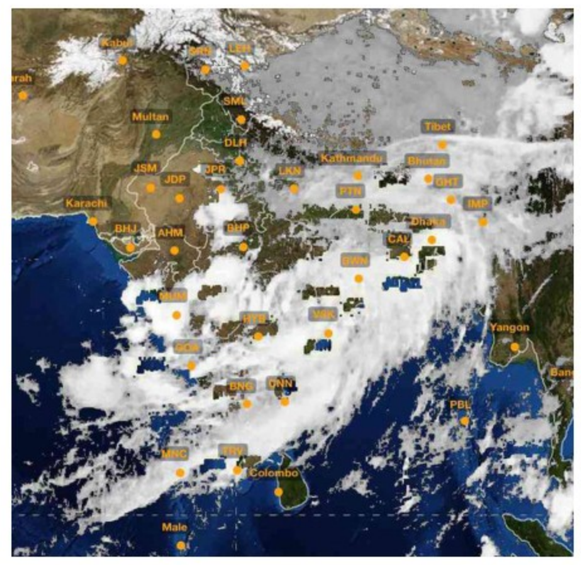
Andhra Pradesh to ink pact with Karnataka to deploy *kumkis* in wild elephant-affected areas

V. Raghavendra
VIJAYAWADA

The Forest Departments of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka will sign a memorandum of understanding on Friday to deploy *kumkis* (trained elephants) from Karnataka for controlling wild elephants, which have been raiding crops and killing people in Andhra Pradesh. According to a post on 'X' by the office of Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Panchayat Raj and Rural Development and Environment and Forests K. Pawan Kalyan, the Karnataka Forest Department has been asked to send eight *kumkis* to control wild elephants entering human habitations in the State, mostly in Chittoor and Parvathipuram Manyam districts.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Thursday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Saurashtra & Kutch, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Sikkim, Odisha, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, central Maharashtra, Konkan & Goa and coastal Karnataka

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	6	30.5	25.6	Kozhikode	2	33.5	24.8
Ahmedabad	0.4	36.8	28.2	Kurnool	9	31.5	24.3
Aizawl	5	27.2	23.9	Lucknow	—	33.9	27.0
Allahabad	—	34.7	28.0	Madurai	—	41.6	26.3
Bengaluru	—	28.1	21.5	Mangaluru	65	28.2	23.5
Bhopal	—	33.5	25.2	Mumbai	74	30.4	24.5
Bhubaneswar	6	30.5	25.9	Mysuru	—	28.0	20.0
Chandigarh	—	36.4	27.4	New Delhi	—	37.3	26.8
Chennai	12	36.0	25.5	Patna	12	31.6	26.6
Coimbatore	—	33.5	23.0	Port Blair	38	30.5	24.6
Dehradun	—	33.7	24.2	Puducherry	—	37.0	26.0
Gangtok	23	20.5	17.7	Pune	63.2	31.6	23.4
Goa	138	28.2	24.2	Raipur	—	30.2	25.2
Guwahati	8	30.0	24.6	Ranchi	15	25.6	22.8
Hubballi	—	26.0	22.0	Shillong	5.4	21.9	18.0
Hyderabad	2	30.6	23.9	Shimla	—	27.0	20.8
Imphal	5	27.2	20.6	Srinagar	—	32.8	17.4
Jaipur	—	36.0	27.6	Thiruvananthapuram	4	31.4	25.0
Kochi	2	30.4	24.0	Tiruchi	—	39.7	27.6
Kohima	—	27.0	20.1	Vijayawada	27	29.6	25.2
Kolkata	19.8	27.8	25.8	Visakhapatnam	4	30.2	26.0

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	9	42	35	96	105	
Bengaluru	18	33	69	—	99	
Chennai	17	2	23	54	121	
Delhi	10	70	81	326	329	
Hyderabad	14	10	50	53	75	
Kolkata	4	40	29	17	27	
Lucknow	11	10	40	92	58	
Mumbai	3	28	30	30	167	
Pune	7	49	65	33	37	
Visakhapatnam	9	37	37	67	68	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 275 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Ariyalur, Tamil Nadu recorded a healthy AQI score of 14

Air Quality Code: Poor | Moderate | Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

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Kashmir conflict

The political divide between national parties and regional parties is clear

The first two rounds of the three-phase Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) elections have brought to the fore the contesting visions for the region, between the national and regional parties, and between the national parties, the BJP and the Congress. This is the first Assembly election in 10 years, and also the first after J&K lost its statehood and special status in 2019. The National Conference (NC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) have vowed to fight for the restoration of special status, especially bringing back Articles 370 and 35A. Both parties have made identical promises on releasing jailed youth and withdrawing cases against them. They have also hinted at revoking laws such as the Public Safety Act (PSA), often used to take locals into preventive detention, and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, frequently invoked against locals allegedly helping militants and separatists. Both have also promised to revisit the termination of hundreds of government employees on suspicion of supporting militancy, and the denial of passports and jobs to locals on the basis of adverse police reports. The issue of statehood and restarting the dialogue with Pakistan are also central to the manifestos of these regional parties. On the question of statehood, all parties are in agreement, but the BJP, which is in power at the Centre, is still non-committal about the timeline.

The BJP has ruled out the return of special status and Article 370. It has turned that into a weapon against the Congress and the regional parties, which it blames for the alienation of Kashmir from the rest of India. The BJP fielded Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh among others in its intense bid to win the mandate in the crucial Union Territory. The party succeeded in undoing the special status of J&K, fulfilling one of the central pieces of its ideological programme. The party has always used its position on Kashmir more as a mobilisation strategy elsewhere in the country. But, this time, it is being tested in the place where it matters. The Congress, which is contesting the election in alliance with the NC, has been walking a tightrope on the question of special status. Its leader, Rahul Gandhi, has pledged to fight for Kashmir within and outside Parliament but is silent on the tricky issue of Article 370. While he has accused the BJP of using the J&K Lieutenant Governor to centralise power and disempower the local political leadership, the BJP has sought to draw parallels between the Congress's agenda and that of Pakistan. The battle for power has caused parties and other actors to drift away from any possible convergence.

Rogue state

Israel is choosing war over peace, escalation over compromise

First the pagers exploded. Then came the walkie-talkies. And then, Israel launched a massive bombardment campaign targeting Hezbollah, the powerful Iran-backed Lebanese-Shia militant group. As it appears, the pager and walkie-talkie explosions were a part of Israel's coordinated strategy aimed at weakening Hezbollah in their slow-burning war since October 7, 2023. When Israel launched its Gaza invasion after Hamas's attack a year ago, Hezbollah began firing rockets into Israel "in solidarity with the Palestinians". While both sides exchanged fire, they were wary of not letting the tensions spiral into an all-out war. But that caution was abandoned when Israel killed Fuad Shukr, a senior Hezbollah commander, in an air strike on Beirut on July 31. Israel's large-scale air strikes, especially in southern Lebanon, a Hezbollah stronghold, saw the militia group firing hundreds of rockets into Israel. The war in the north has forced about 70,000 Israelis out of their homes. Earlier this month, Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced that enabling the displaced residents to return to their homes in the northern Upper Galilee region was one of the objectives of the ongoing war. Then came the pager explosions and the subsequent air strikes.

According to Lebanese authorities, at least 575 people, including women and children, were killed in Israel's air strikes in just two days. In retaliation, Hezbollah fired more projectiles, including a ballistic missile on Wednesday towards Tel Aviv. The conflict is now in an escalatory spiral and what is to be seen is whether Israel would launch a ground invasion. In 1978, Israel invaded Lebanon with the aim of pushing out Palestinian guerrillas north of the Litani river. The operation was unsuccessful. In 1982, its invasion – this time, the goal was to push the PLO out of Lebanon – managed to force the PLO to relocate from Lebanon, but the war led to the creation of Hezbollah. In 2000, after 18 years of Hezbollah's resistance, Israel withdrew, leaving a buffer it had carved out on the border in the hands of Hezbollah. In 2006, after a Hezbollah cross-border raid, Israel launched another invasion, but after 30 days of fighting, withdrew as part of a ceasefire agreement with Hezbollah. If the past is any indication, Israel is making another mistake in Lebanon. A ceasefire in Gaza, which has been overwhelmingly demanded by the international community, would have quietened the northern border. Instead, Mr. Netanyahu, whose troops have killed over 40,000 Palestinians in 11 months in Gaza, has chosen to escalate the war with Hezbollah, killing hundreds more and pushing West Asia to the brink of an all-out war. This bellicosity, callousness and total disregard for international law and norms all bear the hallmarks of a rogue state. A rogue state with impunity.

The misplaced move of 'one nation one election'

P.D.T. Achary

former Secretary General, Lok Sabha

The idea of simultaneous elections, to the Lok Sabha, the State Assemblies and the local bodies, was thrown up by the Prime Minister a couple of years ago. Frequent Assembly and local body elections kept him busy on the campaign trail in some parts of the country most of the time. This experience may have been the trigger for the idea to hold elections at one time.

This also led to the formation of a high-level committee on simultaneous elections, which was headed by the former President of India, Ram Nath Kovind. Other members of the committee included the Home Minister, Amit Shah, former Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Ghulam Nabi Azad, former Chairman, Fifteenth Finance Commission N.K. Singh, former Secretary-General, Lok Sabha Subhash C. Kashyap, senior advocate Harish Salve and former Chief Vigilance Commissioner Sanjay Kothari. Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Law and Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal, was a special invitee. The committee's report was submitted to the President of India in March this year. Thus the recommendations were available to the public before the 2024 general election. Moreover, the idea of 'simultaneous elections' was a part of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party's manifesto (BJP) for this general election. If the ruling party had won a majority in this election it could have claimed that the idea had been endorsed by voters. But in the absence of a majority, it becomes difficult to assume that voters are in approval of it.

Be that as it may, it is nothing less than a miracle that a high-level committee could come up with such a voluminous report (18,626 pages) within a relatively short time on an issue of great importance. With the Union Cabinet having approved the recommendation, the subject of 'one nation one election' has reached almost take-off stage. In the first phase, Lok Sabha and Assembly elections will be held simultaneously, while local body elections will be conducted within 100 days of the general election.

An amendment Bill and its fate

The recommendation on simultaneous elections involves amendments to various Articles of the Constitution. The crucial amendment is on the tenure of Assemblies which will no longer have fixity. Since the tenure of the Assemblies will have to be synchronised with that of the Lok Sabha, it is only natural that State Assemblies, which, under Article 172, have a fixed tenure of five years will lose it.

But before going into further details, let us look at what the fate of the Constitution amendment Bill that will be introduced in the 18th Lok Sabha for this purpose will be. After the Bill is introduced, the next important stage is its consideration, which means a general debate on it. After the debate is concluded, the motion for consideration is put to the vote of the House. At that stage, the special majority, namely, the majority of the total membership of the House and a majority of not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting, will be required.

> On the contrary, the holding of frequent elections in India has many positive benefits

Only if the motion for consideration is passed with the special majority will the House consider the subsequent stages, i.e., clause by clause consideration, and finally pass the Bill. If all 543 members are present in the House to vote then the support of 362 members will be required. It is understood that the ruling National Democratic Alliance has around 292 members at present. Thus, there is a wide gap between this number and the special majority number of 362. Since the Opposition parties are opposed to the 'one nation one election' proposition, perhaps the government will find it extremely difficult to mobilise the special majority. Thus, in such a situation, the fate of the Constitution amendment Bill will be decided at the stage of consideration itself. The simple message from all this is that without the support of the Opposition, no Constitution amendment Bill will be able to be passed in the Parliament of today.

The arguments are thin

The high-level committee has recommended simultaneous elections for two reasons. First, the issue of savings in expenses given the humongous amounts of money spent in each election. If all elections are held only once in five years the savings will be enormous. But this is an argument that needs closer examination. Under Article 324, all elections to Parliament and the State legislatures are conducted by the Election Commission of India (ECI). The money required to hold elections is sanctioned by Parliament as a part of the Budget. For the financial year 2023-24, the total allocation made by Parliament to the ECI is ₹466 crore. Obviously this allocation was made for meeting the expenditure in connection with the 2024 general election. For 2022-23, the total allocation was only ₹320 crore. Thus the total amount allotted to the ECI for the general election – ₹466 crore – is not a very huge amount.

Of course expenditure is incurred also by the State governments to meet logistical requirements in connection with elections. Under Article 324(6), staff are required to be provided to the ECI on demand for the elections. Under Section 160 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, State governments are empowered to requisition premises and even vehicles for election purposes. All these arrangements require money which the States will have to provide. But even after all these expenses are also considered, the total expenditure incurred by the Union and State governments cannot be categorised as being huge or enormous.

Yes, the money spent by the political parties is mind boggling, but the point is that the money that would be saved by the political parties due to the holding of elections once in five years is not going to be spent on, for example, road building or the building of bridges or hospitals. No political party has ever done such things. After all, we had simultaneous elections from 1951-52 to 1967. There is no evidence that the political parties have ever built roads for instance during this long period. Therefore, the assumption that the money saved can be used for building infrastructure does not seem to be based on any empirical evidence.

The second reason is that frequent elections will disrupt developmental plans and projects of the government because of the model code of conduct being in force most of the time. Once again there is no empirical evidence to prove this argument. After all, periodic or frequent elections have been held since 1967 till today. But it is not known that elections have stopped the developmental momentum. It is interesting to note in this context that demonetisation of 85% of India's currency was done close to the Uttar Pradesh Assembly election.

A move against federalism

Curtailing the tenures of State Assemblies to synchronise them with the tenure of the Lok Sabha is an act against federalism. Under the Constitution of India, State Assemblies are autonomous law-making bodies within the India federation and are independent of the federal parliament. A fixed tenure of the Assemblies independent of the tenure of the Lok Sabha is a key aspect of the federal setup. Under the *Kesavananda Bharati* decision, Parliament does not have the power to alter the basic structure. Federalism is a part of the basic structure. The proposed amendments which seek to do away with the fixity of tenure of the Assemblies would amount to altering the basic structure. Whether ratification by Assemblies will be necessary or not is not the key issue. If this amendment is carried out, some Assemblies will have a term of three years. It may be two years or so for others.

As a matter of fact, frequent elections have many positive benefits. First, they will enhance the accountability of elected representatives. Frequent elections compel them to go back to the people and reconnect with them frequently. Elections once in five years would mean that representatives would not feel compelled to go to the people. They would slowly move away from them and try to reconnect with them only in the election year. Similarly, if elections are held only once in five years, political parties will slowly become lethargic and, in course of time, will cease to be the effective vehicles of peoples' aspirations. From the angle of governments, frequent elections will show them which way the wind blows and a government in office can do course correction.

In conclusion, simultaneous elections will alter the federal balance of the Constitution and it is not a priority issue for ordinary Indians. Therefore, the game is not worth the candle.

China's warning shots with minerals that run the world

Abhishek Sharma

a Research Assistant with the Observer Research Foundation's Strategic Studies Programme

On August 15 this year, China announced its decision to restrict the export of antimony, a critical mineral used in strategic sectors such as defence, for military equipment such as missiles, infrared sensors, flares, ammunition, and even nuclear weapons. China's Commerce Ministry justified this move on the basis of "national security", adding that the measure would take effect from September 15. The declaration, however, was part of a series of countermoves that began in August 2023.

Moves and countermoves

When it comes to critical minerals, China is not only a stakeholder but also a leader. It dominates every supply chain segment – upstream, midstream, and downstream, covering mining, extraction, refining and processing. It enjoys a near-monopoly status, controlling 60% of rare earth production, 60% of critical minerals production and 80% of the processing worldwide. Therefore, any decision China makes has profound national security implications globally. The European Union and countries such as India, Japan and the United States are strategically vulnerable due to their dependence on critical minerals.

China's intimidating behaviour first gained international attention in the aftermath of the incident in 2010 when a Chinese trawler collided with Japanese Coast Guard boats, after which it halted the exports of rare earth elements to Japan. The event also led to serious global discussions about the world's dependence on China for strategic minerals. The recent antimony episode has only reaffirmed the western belief that China is willing to use critical minerals to coerce. All of this became evident in mid-2023 when China announced a set of restrictions on the exports of critical minerals with U.S. export control measures. In 2023, following the decision by the Netherlands to restrict the supply of semiconductor equipment, under pressure from the U.S., China announced curbs on the export of gallium and germanium, two critical minerals used in solar cells and computer chips. Similarly, again in 2023, after the U.S. announced export control on "advanced computing, semiconductors, and semiconductors manufacturing equipment", China reciprocated by curbing the export of "high-purity, high-hardness and high-intensity synthetic graphite material and natural flake graphite and its products", widely used in electric vehicle (EV) batteries, fuel cells, and nuclear reactors. These steps were primarily aimed at responding to U.S. actions and sending a strong signal that if pushed to the wall, China would not hesitate to weaponise the critical mineral supply chain. Apart from these two steps, China has reminded the U.S. of its monopoly and monopsony as a mineral power and buyer, exhibiting the importance of its critical minerals in developing the U.S.'s high technology and green energy sectors. China has also restricted the export of rare earth processing technologies in making rare earth magnets used in EVs, in addition to technologies used to extract and separate critical minerals, hamstringing the U.S.-led attempt to build an alternative supply chain.

> Restricting access to strategic resources is a classic statecraft strategy that China seems to be perfecting

A hardening of foreign policy posture

Restricting access to strategic resources is a classic statecraft strategy, hitting the enemy's weak points, an example being the U.S. oil embargo against Japan in 1940. Therefore, this is expected from an aspiring great power such as China, which seeks to leverage its status as a mineral power. The difference in China's case is that this initially started as an act to intimidate countries. However, with recent countermoves, critical minerals export controls have now become a part of China's foreign policy objectives. It has moved from the politicisation to the weaponisation stage. For two reasons, China has grown more comfortable using its mineral resources as a political tool. First, Beijing is reminding the West of its strategic dependency on China by demonstrating its status as a mineral power and exerting control over the supply chain. Second, China is responding in like and believes that it is acceptable to take advantage of the situation to sabotage the West's critical mineral supply chain, which will hinder the development of its high-tech sectors and undermine their efforts to decouple and de-risk. Those critical minerals utilised in dual-use applications are major targets in particular as they are needed in the building of the Virginia class submarine and the F-35 fighter aircraft, which require several hundred pounds of rare earth elements. This shows that the aggressive, reciprocal and coercive approach has taken over the cooperative and collaborative approach, one of China's two schools of thought. It signals that Chinese curbs via export control will only grow as ties with the West deteriorate. According to Chinese Natural Resource Minister Wang Guanghua, "China will push forward exploration, increase critical minerals capacity, and enhance mineral resources reserves over the next five years", thus displaying China's ambitions to leave no stone unturned.

India's vulnerability

Like its Quad partners, Australia, Japan and the U.S., India remains vulnerable due to its strategic dependence on China. New Delhi is heavily dependent on the imports of critical minerals such as lithium, nickel, cobalt and copper, which resulted in an import cost of around ₹34,000 crore in FY23. It is estimated that India's hunger for minerals will only grow, and so will the import cost, further increasing India's vulnerability. Hence, this episode must act as a wake-up call for India and the policymakers who have been slow in taking precautionary measures such as having partnerships with like-minded countries and investing in developing alternative supply chains.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Extrajudicial actions

Recent reports of police encounters that have resulted in the deaths of alleged criminals, raise a critical question about India's justice system and accountability.

How does the system allow the police to act as judge, jury and executioner? The cases in Badlapur, Unnao and Chennai reveal a disturbing trend where due process seems to have been disregarded. It is most imperative that the judiciary in India intervenes and upholds the principles of justice in a democracy.

Anshu Bharti,
Begusarai, Bihar

Framework for education

I write this letter as a former Vice-Chancellor, Shri Venkateshwara University, Gajraula, U.P. and Oriental University, Indore; adviser, RNB Global University, Bikaner, Rajasthan; President, Indian Council of Sports and Culture, Indore, and United Nations member – Education and Research Commission (IOED). The article, "The NCrF as a framework for well-rounded education" (Editorial page, September 25), was elaborate. But the writer does not seem to have a feel of the ground realities and the difficulties that higher education institutes (HEI) face. Most HEIs are affiliated institutions that are not authorised to change the curriculum to incorporate multi-disciplinary education. Private institutions concentrate on image-building, aiming for a higher ranking in the accreditation systems NAAC/NIRF/NBA, or through social media. Most institutions are unaware of 'ABC' or the Academic Bank of Credit accounts. It would be ideal to include institutional activities in the 'ABC' as a prerequisite to apply for NBA/NAAC/NIRF.

V.D. Abraham,
Kochi, Kerala

Taking stock of global nuclear disarmament

Priyanjali Malik

Author of India's Nuclear Debate: Exceptionalism and the Bomb

In the United Nations calendar, September 26 is the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. This year's General Assembly agenda includes a session on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), or the Ban Treaty, as distinguished from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, NPT. It will be a chance to take stock at a time when the UN is bitterly divided – over the war in Ukraine; over the Israel-Palestine conflict; and in responding to accelerating climate change and other related inequalities. Nuclear possession – threats or their use – threads through all these divisions. How the countries, including India, that have stayed out of the TPNW respond to the discussions will therefore matter greatly. If they allow the treaty's supporters to continue their efforts in expanding the Ban Treaty's footprint, the goal of the treaty – total nuclear disarmament – will be boosted. But if the treaty is undermined, nuclear weapons will become more entrenched, and the shadow of nuclear use will lengthen.

What the Ban Treaty says

The TPNW, which came into force in 2021, has once again divided the nuclear haves and their allies, and the nuclear abstainers. It is extensive in its prohibitions: signatories are barred from developing, testing, producing, stockpiling, transferring, using, deploying, keeping, or threatening to use any nuclear explosive devices. Thus, it goes beyond the NPT, which bans proliferation, but only promises to consider disarmament, and is silent on nuclear use, including deterrence.

The TPNW arose from a collection of UN agencies and NGOs coming together under the Humanitarian Initiative to highlight the lasting and pernicious consequences of nuclear weapons, covering development, deployment, and use on people, their health, and the environment. Discussions moved to the UN, with the General Assembly mandated to convene a conference in 2017 to negotiate 'a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination'. Thus the only treaty that legally bans all nuclear weapons and their use was adopted, but without the participation of nuclear weapons states and their allies, despite these states reiterating their commitment to nuclear disarmament. All of them registered their opposition to the treaty during its negotiation and when it came into force, thereby establishing themselves as 'persistent objectors' who could not be bound by the treaty's provisions and who do not consider it as contributing to customary international law.

Yet, resistance to the treaty amongst the allies of the nuclear haves may not be unyielding. Recent nuclear developments, such as Russia's nuclear sabre-rattling, China's rising weapons count, Iran's continuing uranium enrichment, and North Korea's tests and threats have renewed discussions on nuclear risks. A group of former leaders and officials of NATO states published an open letter urging their countries to join the treaty and thereby "place nuclear weapons on the same legal footing as chemical and biological weapons". Among the former Prime Ministers and other officials are two former NATO Secretaries-General and a former UN Secretary General. These are significant voices.

As of July 2024, the TPNW had 70 states parties. Another 27 had signed but not yet ratified it. This support from 97 states represents almost 50% of states and parties bound to the legal framework on weapons of mass destruction. Their efforts could precipitate a process of questioning several beliefs about nuclear deterrence.

Assumptions about deterrence have already been tested since Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022. Despite China and Russia's 'friendship without limits', Chinese President Xi Jinping made public his opposition to Russian President Vladimir Putin's nuclear sabre-rattling. The U.S. signalled that nuclear adventurism would be met with a commensurate response; it did not specify that such a response would necessarily be nuclear. Washington also did not change its nuclear preparation level as a result. In other words, nuclear threats were countered without an overtly nuclear response, thereby contradicting one of the justifications for continued nuclear possession.

Treading a fine line

Sitting out a treaty is not the same as undermining it. India has not signed the NPT. New Delhi perceives the NPT to be discriminatory, believes that it does not promote disarmament, and is contrary to India's interests. However, India has arguably benefited from the NPT's curbing of the spread of nuclear weapons. It has never actively undermined the treaty – rhetoric and abstention notwithstanding.

Other nuclear possessors could similarly tread a fine line of staying away from the TPNW while not challenging it. The TPNW has weaknesses, chiefly, the lack of a robust enforcement mechanism, but its normative potential in delegitimising nuclear possession and deterrence should not be underestimated. If the treaty eventually succeeds in relegating nuclear weapons to the same pariah status as chemical and biological weapons, that will make us all much safer. This will certainly not happen during the General Assembly session or any time soon. The norm against nuclear use has solidified over decades; nuclear testing is gradually being delegitimised by the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, even if it has not come into force. The Ban Treaty could similarly start an honest discussion about the utility and effectiveness of nuclear weapons.

> The Ban Treaty could start an honest discussion about the utility and effectiveness of nuclear weapons

A war of words over political Islam

The IUML's role in maintaining harmony in Kerala is crucial

STATE OF PLAY

Biju Govind
biju.govind@thehindu.co.in

Last week, senior CPI(M) leader P. Jayarajan triggered a debate when he alleged that young people were being lured into terror outfits such as the Islamic State due to the influence of political Islam in Kerala.

Talking to the media ahead of the release of his Malayalam book, Kerala: Muslim Politics and Political Islam, in Kozhikode, Mr. Jayarajan claimed that there was an alliance between the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) and the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind (JIH). He warned that political Islam is dangerous, as was seen in the rise of extremist groups such as the JIH and the Popular Front of India (PFI), which was banned by the Indian government in 2022.

His comments drew sharp criticism from the IUML and Congress. The IUML national general secretary, P.K. Kunhalikutty, insisted that his party has always been vigilant in addressing radical tendencies. The IUML State president, Syed Sadiqali Shihab Thangal, accused Mr. Jayarajan of "exploiting the Islamic State recruitment issue for political mileage at a time when the Islamic State is being dismantled globally." At the same time, Congress leader K. Muraleedharan alleged that Mr. Jayarajan's book was a strategy by the CPI(M) to reclaim Hindu votes, which have been drifting towards the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). He also claimed that the CPI(M) and BJP had a covert agreement. To buttress his argument, he cited the statement of the Speaker, A.N. Shamseer, who described the Rashtriya

Swayamsevak Sangh as an important organisation in India.

Mr. Jayarajan's views have also provided ammunition to Sangh Parivar outfits, which have been alleging that Kerala has emerged as a breeding ground for Islamic terrorists under the CPI(M)-led Left Democratic Front (LDF) government. These outfits have used conspiracy theories such as 'love jihad' and 'narcotics jihad' to drive anti-Muslim propaganda.

Mr. Jayarajan's comments drew responses from the outfits he mentioned too. The Welfare Party of India (WPI), the political wing of the JIH, accused the CPI(M) of aligning with the Sangh Parivar and demanded Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's response to the allegations. The WPI and the Social Democratic Party of India, the political face of the PFI, had supported the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

Parts of the Christian community waded in too. Deepika, a Malayalam newspaper managed by the clergy and popular among the Syrian Catholics, published an editorial asking whether the CPI(M) endorsed Mr. Jayarajan's views. It stated that both the Congress and CPI(M) have been pandering to political Islam and argued that Mr. Jayarajan's book is relevant.

It is a fact that a few young people from Kerala joined the Islamic State and travelled to Syria and Afghanistan, although the numbers are not known. In 2009, four people joined terrorist groups in Kupwara in Kashmir and were killed in an encounter with the Indian Army.

Previously, second-rung IUML leaders, such as K.M. Shaji, would argue that the Islamic State was inspired by Syed Abul Ala Maududi, the founder of JIH. The CPI(M) leadership believes that the IUML and JIH developed a bonhomie from the 2019 Lok Sabha elections and that the JIH's theocratic ideology is subtly dominating the IUML's agenda since its ally, the Congress, is not in power in Kerala or at the Centre.

While the rise of political Islam in Kerala has often been a cause for concern, social commentators are confident that it will not succeed given the State's political ecosystem. The IUML leadership, particularly the Thangal, has taken a resolute stance against Islamic fundamentalism. Moreover, the powerful body of Sunni scholars, the Samastha Kerala Jamiyyathul Ulama, is vehemently opposed to extremism in the community. Muslims form more than 25% of the population in Kerala. The Kerala Nadvathul Mujahideen, another influential Muslim organisation, also said that Mr. Jayarajan was capitalising on anti-Muslim sentiment for selling his book.

Muslims peacefully coexist with other religious communities in Kerala and recognise the attempts being made by fringe elements to radicalise them. Given the delicate situation, the IUML's role in maintaining a harmonious communal atmosphere and preserving Kerala's secular principles is crucial.

A historic election in Sri Lanka

The extraordinary rise of Anura Kumara Dissanayake and how the JVP-NPP has been able to spread its wings in every district

DATA POINT

T. Ramakrishnan

For the first time since 1978, in presidential elections in Sri Lanka, no candidate won more than 50% of the total votes in the first round of counting. Anura Kumara Dissanayake of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), put up under the banner of the National People's Power (NPP), obtained 42.31%. He was declared the winner after the second count, which tallied voters' second and third choice candidates. This too was historic: no election in Sri Lanka has ever progressed to the second round of counting.

An analysis of the votes obtained in the first round of counting, excluding preferences, reveals that seven out of 22 electoral districts in the island nation – three each in the Western Province (Colombo, Gampaha, and Kalutara) and Southern Province (Galle, Matara, and Hambantota), and one in the North-Western Province (Kurunegala) – account for 57% of the vote share of Mr. Dissanayake.

Coincidentally, in 2019, the collective share of the seven districts in the total votes of Mr. Dissanayake's predecessor, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, was about 55%. The similarity does not stop there. As in the case of the former president five years ago, Mr. Dissanayake too got more than 50% of the votes in Gampaha and the three districts of the Southern Province. In these four districts, he exceeded the 50% mark, whereas Mr. Rajapaksa achieved this in 11 more districts. There is a difference of nearly 10 percentage points between the vote share that Mr. Dissanayake secured this time (42.31%) and what Mr. Rajapaksa secured in 2019 (52.25%). What is remarkable is that five years ago, Mr. Dissanayake got a vote share of merely 3.16%. He has clearly reaped the political dividends from the Janatha Aragalaya, which arose due to an economic crisis in 2022.

Last election, of the about 4.18 lakh votes that Mr. Dissanayake received, the share of the seven districts was around 55%. The difference now is that the JVP-NPP has been able to spread its wings in every other district. In Matale in the Central Province, for instance, Mr. Dissanayake had received 2.6% of the votes in 2019; this rose to 41.37% in 2024. It was in Matale where several incidents of human rights violations were reported to have taken place in 1989 during the armed conflict between the Ranasinghe Premadasa-led United National Party (UNP) government and the JVP, which had organised an insurrections in 1971 and in 1987-89.

Even though Mr. Dissanayake lagged behind his immediate rival, Sajith Premadasa, of the Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB), in the districts with a substantial number of ethnic minorities, he improved his performance from 2019. In Digamadulla (Ampara) in the East, for instance, he did not get even 2% of the votes in 2019; this time, he secured more than 25%. Yet, the JVP chief could not secure an outright victory unlike his predecessors. The acceptability of his party remains an issue with a majority of voters of the country.

Mr. Sajith, who lost the presidential election for the second consecutive time, could have emerged the winner but for the presence of his one-time colleague in the UNP, former President Ranil Wickremesinghe, in the fray. Compared to 2019, Mr. Sajith's vote share went down by about 10 points, to 32.8%, and Mr. Wickremesinghe, as an independent candidate, garnered around 17%. To make Mr. Sajith's position more difficult, a 'common Tamil candidate', P. Ariyanethiran, who was supported by many parties and groups, secured about 2.26 lakh votes, two-thirds from Jaffna and Vanni districts in the North, and polled 1.7%. There was no such candidate last time.

A snapshot of the Sri Lankan elections

The data for the tables were sourced from the Election Commission of Sri Lanka

The newly elected President of Sri Lanka, Anura Kumara Dissanayake

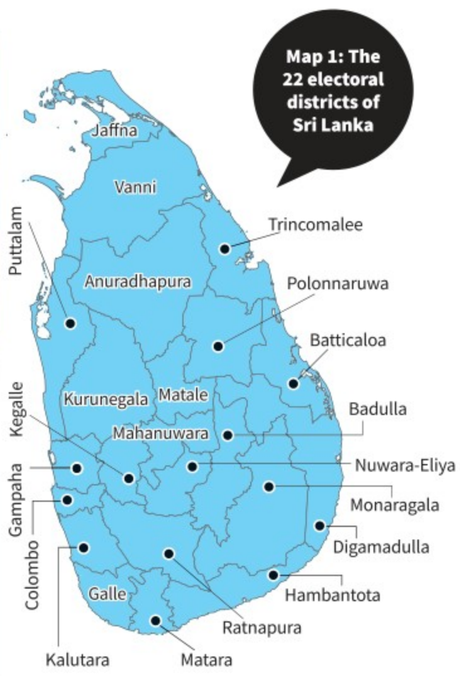


Table 2: The table shows the overall % share of votes secured by major candidates in the 2019 and 2024 presidential elections

	Gotabaya Rajapaksa	Anura Kumara Dissanayake		Sajith Premadasa		Ranil Wickremesinghe
	2019	2019	2024	2019	2024	2024
Overall	52.3	3.2	42.3	42.0	32.8	17.3

Table 3: The table shows the electoral district-wise % share of votes secured by major candidates in the 2019 and 2024 presidential elections. Figures in %

	Gotabaya Rajapaksa	Anura Kumara Dissanayake		Sajith Premadasa		Ranil Wickremesinghe
Electoral district	2019	2019	2024	2019	2024	2024
Colombo	53.2	3.9	47.2	40.9	25.6	21.1
Gampaha	59.3	4.3	55.5	34.3	34.3	14.8
Kalutara	59.5	3.4	47.4	35.0	28.9	17.5
Mahanuwara	50.4	2.5	42.3	44.6	34.7	17.4
Nuwara-Eliya	36.9	1.2	22.2	58.3	42.6	29.3
Matale	55.4	2.6	41.4	39.6	35.9	15.8
Trincomalee	23.4	1.6	20.8	72.1	50.4	16.9
Batticaloa	12.7	0.8	12.2	78.7	43.7	28.6
Digamadulla	32.8	1.8	25.7	63.1	47.3	20.5
Jaffna	6.2	0.4	7.3	83.9	32.6	22.8
Vanni	12.3	0.5	9.9	82.1	43.9	24.2
Galle	64.3	3.7	51.5	30.0	26.6	15.1
Hambantota	66.2	6.2	52.0	25.9	30.8	7.8
Matara	67.3	4.2	52.5	26.8	26.9	14.5
Kurunegala	57.9	3.2	48.2	37.0	32.6	13.0
Puttalam	50.8	2.8	44.1	43.9	36.9	12.9
Polonnaruwa	53.0	4.4	46.1	40.5	35.5	13.0
Anuradhapura	59.0	3.9	47.4	34.9	33.5	13.6
Badulla	49.3	2.6	34.7	44.9	38.6	20.2
Monaragala	65.3	3.5	41.9	29.0	40.1	10.7
Kegalle	55.7	2.6	43.4	39.6	32.6	18.7
Ratnapura	59.9	2.5	39.3	35.4	34.7	19.6

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO SEPTEMBER 26, 1974

India warns Pak. against annexation of Hunza state

New Delhi, Sept. 25: The Government of India to-day reacted sharply to Pakistan's reported annexation of the State of Hunza in Jammu and Kashmir and charged Mr. Bhutto with using his strictures against India on the Sikkim issue as a cover-up for this "hasty and arbitrary" action of his. The reaction came from an official spokesman here this evening.

The spokesman said Pakistan's unilateral action "abolishing" Hunza, which is a principality of Jammu and Kashmir, and merging it with the northern area of that country had brought about "a material change in the situation".

Pakistan "has no right or sanction for this", he said. The spokesman said the Government of India noted this development with "surprise".

The following is the text of the spokesman's comment: "Prime Minister Bhutto's announcement reported by Radio Pakistan on September 24 to the effect that the State of Hunza has been abolished and this area has been merged with the northern areas to be administered by the Resident Commissioner of Gilgit and Baltistan has been noted with surprise. The haste and arbitrariness of this action is particularly glaring in view of the fact that Hunza is a principality of the State of Jammu and Kashmir which had acceded to India and thus at best Pakistan is only in illegal occupation of the northern area of this State. Pakistan, though this action, has unilaterally brought about a material change in the situation regarding one of the northern territories of Jammu and Kashmir for which it has no right or sanction."

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO SEPTEMBER 26, 1924

Spinning club at Cochin

Cochin, Sept. 26: Under the auspices of the Kerala Provincial Khadi Board a Spinning Club was opened here yesterday in honour of Mr. Gandhi's birthday through the efforts of Mr. Kurur Nilakanta Nambudripad. So many as twenty members have been enrolled including Messrs. Dwarkdas Govinda Sarma, Bahulayan, and Rainaswami Aiyer and it is stipulated that every member should spin at least for half an hour every day and send 3,000 yards of well-twisted handspun yarn every month to the All-India Khaddar Board.

‘I have the trust of the PM and the people of Rajasthan’

Chief Minister says his vision is to create a prosperous and thriving State and that he will take everyone along in his mission as he shares a deep connect with every BJP worker; he says his top priorities are generating employment for the unemployed youth, ensuring housing for all, improving healthcare services, providing tap water to every household, and increasing the income of farmers

INTERVIEW

Bhajan Lal Sharma

Varghese K. George

When the BJP central leadership hand-picked Bhajan Lal Sharma, a first-time MLA, as the Chief Minister of Rajasthan in December 2023, it was a surprise to all, particularly the party workers. In an exclusive interview, Mr. Sharma elaborates on his efforts to consolidate his leadership and governance initiatives.

Nine months ago, you became CM. You are a first-time MLA, and many others within the party who are senior to you may not like this fact. How do you manage?

My party’s leadership, Prime Minister Narendra Modi*ji* and Amit Shah*ji* trusted me with the job of serving the people of Rajasthan. Yes, it is legitimate that other people too may have had ambitions to be CM, but now that I am here, everyone supports me. I believe in taking everyone along and all my colleagues are in touch with me. I listen to everyone’s rational issues and try to fulfil their expectations. As general secretary of the State BJP for many years, I have travelled across the State, and have stayed in almost every constituency, every taluka. I have a deep connect with the workers of the BJP. As CM today, I talk to party workers in all parts of the State, every morning for several hours. I begin with calls to junior-most *karyakartas* and the common people who try to contact me. Everyone knows that we are all working for the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi*ji*, and I have faced no resistance from anyone. In fact, I get the support of all party colleagues, juniors and seniors. My strength is the trust of the national leadership in me and the people of my State.

So you feel fully in control, nine months into the job?

Nine months is indeed a short time to bring sweeping changes, especially in a system that has suffered from deep-rooted corruption and irregularities of the Congress system of five years. We inherited a fiscal loss of almost ₹5.5 lakh crore. Scams in govern-

EMMANUAL YOGINI

ment jobs, corruption, law and order situation, water and power availability were some of the major challenges.

We created an SIT [special investigation team] to look into paper leaks in recruitment exams on the very first day of the government, we signed over 2.25 lakh MoUs for power production, did agreements with other States, including water agreements... We are focused on transforming Rajasthan into a $350-billion economy.

What explains the BJP’s setback in the Lok Sabha election? You got only 14 of the 25 seats, a significant drop from 2019.

Congress managed to mislead our voters, making a false narrative that we were planning to change the Constitution and end reservation. People have now realised that the BJP is committed to reservation for the backward sections of our society. They have seen through the Congress hypocrisy. Congress has no ideology or programme. It is only a gathering of the corrupt and the opportunists.

Many people ask, ‘Is the BJP now like Congress?’ The party is taking in a lot of people from other parties, including the Congress.

We have to be tactical in dealing with political challenges. For instance, if we had not made the alliance with the PDP and formed a government in Kashmir, we could not have taken the steps that finally led to the changes to Article 370. You may say it was an opportunistic alliance, but the fact is that it advanced a long-pending principle that the BJP stood for. BJP does not dilute its ideology of Hindutva. We stay firmly committed to it, and people have come to appreciate us for that.

Do you feel you were selected, and not elected, as CM...

See, what matters is that I am now here. My vision is to create a prosperous and thriving Rajasthan. Our top priorities include generating employment for the unemployed youth – we have promised over 10 lakh jobs in the next five years, ensuring housing for all, improving healthcare services, providing tap water to every household, and increasing farmers’ incomes. We have increased the MSP [minimum support price for wheat] to ₹2,400. To tackle unemployment, we said we would fill four lakh vacancies across State government departments over the next five years. Over 150 people have been arrested for question paper leaks from the Rajasthan Public Service Commission (RPSC).

What is the ‘Rising Rajasthan’ initiative?

Investment is crucial to building a prosperous state. States such as Maharashtra, Karnataka and Haryana are advancing because they continuously attract investors. ‘Rising Rajasthan’ initiative is to provide investors with a streamlined process for obtaining information and approvals under one roof.

I am personally involved in bringing investment to Rajasthan.

From Page One

Over 57% turnout ends phase 2 of polls in J&K

Three generations of the Abdullahs – National Conference (NC) president Farooq Abdullah, his son Omar Abdullah and grandsons – voted in Srinagar. “We are hopeful that after October 8, there will be an NC-Congress alliance government in J&K,” Mr. Omar said after casting his vote.

NC MP Syed Aga Ruhullah Mehdi, who voted in Budgam, said, “Significance of voting has been well understood by the people. It is important voters make the right decisions. Right now, unity serves as our sole defence,” Mr. Mehdi said.

‘Growing anger evident’

Tariq Hameed Karra, J&K Pradesh Congress Committee president and candidate from Central Shalteng, said, “Growing anger over the removal of Statehood is evident.”

Enthusiastic voters in Budgam, Srinagar and Ganderbal voted over the issue of higher bills after installation of smart meters, reduction in ration quota at depots and failure to fill government posts.

“Lower-middle class has been crushed by the current regime. In the face of raging unemployment, the Lieutenant-Governor’s administration has introduced a high-rate flat tariff for electricity, introduced property tax and reduced rice per person in ration depots,” said Nazima Ganai, a woman voter from the Eidgah constituency.

MUDA scam: Lokayukta police told to probe case

The other accused persons named in the complaint are B.M. Mallikarjuna Swamy, brother of Ms. Parvathi; and J. Devaraj from whom Mr. Swamy had purchased three acres and 16 guntas of land even after MUDA had formed the layout and allotted sites to various beneficiaries on that parcel of land.

The Special Court passed the order as the High Court of Karnataka on September 24 vacated its earlier interim order, in which the Special Court was directed to pause its proceedings on the private complaint till the High Court adjudicated on Mr. Siddaramaiah’s petition. In his plea, the Chief Minister had challenged the permission granted by the Governor under Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act for conducting an investigation against him.

‘Allegations require probe’

While upholding the permission granted by the Governor, the High Court also found that the facts of the allegations “undoubtedly require an investigation”.

The Special Court has directed the Lokayukta police to invoke the following provisions of the law in the first information report (FIR) to be registered against the accused persons: Sections 120B (criminal conspiracy), 166 (public servant disobeying law, with intent to cause injury to any person) 403 (dishonest misappropriation of property), 406 (criminal breach of trust), 420 (cheating and dishonestly inducing delivery of property), 426 (mischief), 465 (forgery), 340 (wrongful confinement), 351 (assault) and other relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code.

The police were also directed to invoke Sections 9 (offence relating to bribing a public servant by a commercial organisation) and 13 (criminal misconduct by a public servant) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, and the provisions of the Prohibition of Benami Property Transactions Act, 1988, and the Karnataka Land Grabbing Prohibition Act, 2011. Further hearing on the complaint has been adjourned till December 24 pending receipt of the investigation report.

‘NDA govt. is working for benefit of all minorities’

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Union Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju on Wednesday slammed the Congress, saying during its time in the government, the Ministry was seen as “Ministry of Muslim Affairs”.

He said under the NDA government, the Ministry was not focused solely on the Muslim community but worked for the benefit of all six minorities in India.

The Minister, who was briefing the media on the completion of 100 days of the NDA government, came down heavily on the previous Congress governments, and said the party had used Muslims as a “vote bank”.

“Hardly anything was done for the uplift of the community. Such treatment left the Muslim community impoverished,” he added.

Mr. Rijiju said the NDA’s approach towards minorities was more inclusive. “We ensure that all six recognised minority communities – be it Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and Parsis – receive equal attention. Our schemes are for the benefit of all,” he said.

Government mulls over sending Jaishankar for SCO meet in Pakistan

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

As the government considers sending External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar to Pakistan next month to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Heads of Government meeting, former High Commissioners told *The Hindu* that it was important that India participated in the event, separating the failure of bilateral ties from the “value” of the SCO grouping that comprises 10 Eurasian countries, including Russia and China.

Sources said the government was likely to convey who it would depute for the event on October 15-16 in Islamabad in place of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, after Mr. Jaishankar returns from the United States next week.

Neither India nor Pakistan sends its Prime Minister to the Heads of Government event, deputing a Minister or the Vice-President instead.

At least two official sources confirmed to *The Hindu* that the External Affairs Minister was likely to be New Delhi’s choice to attend the summit virtually, or in-person, while one senior official acknowledged, on condition of anonymity, that a visit by Mr. Jaishankar to Pakistan, which would be the first such visit in nearly a decade, “could not be ruled out”.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in Goa in May 2023. PTI

On Wednesday, the External Affairs Ministry shared details for accreditation of Indian journalists for the event in Islamabad in one possible signal that the government hopes to send a high-level dignitary to the SCO event.

“India would only be repaying the favour Pakistan had done by sending [then] Foreign Minister [Bilawal] Bhutto to Goa when India hosted the SCO Foreign Ministers meet in Goa in 2023,” India’s last High Commissioner to Pakistan Ajay Bisaria said. “This would be a good opportunity for India to fulfil its plurilateral commitments while leaving the bilateral ball in Pakistan’s court,” said Mr. Bisaria, who was expelled in August 2019 after the government’s moves to amend Article 370 and reorganise Jammu and Kashmir.

He also pointed to Mr. Jaishankar’s recent statement that India would not be “passive”, and would “react” to both “positive or negative” moves from Pakistan.

No bilateral talks

During the SCO meeting in Goa, Mr. Bhutto and Mr. Jaishankar exchanged greetings but did not hold a bilateral meeting, and the visit ended with both holding acrimonious press conferences criticising each other.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, three other former High Commissioners to Pakistan agreed that India must participate in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation meeting in Islamabad, but Mr. Jaishankar was not bound to hold bilateral talks there with his counterpart, Ishaq Dhar.

“We should not allow India-Pakistan issues to corrode our other relationships. SCO has a certain value for India and we should not let our bilateral difference overshadow that value, as has become the case with SAARC,” said former High Commissioner to Pakistan (2013-2016) T.C.A. Raghavan, who served in Islamabad the last time a Foreign Minister, the late Sushma Swaraj, visited in December 2015, adding however that a “bilateral opening” could never be ruled out when the External Affairs Minister visits another country.

“The SCO is very important for India,” Gautam Bambawale, who preceded Mr. Bisaria as High Commissioner to Pakistan (2016-2017), said. “However, government must make it very clear that the visit is only for the SCO and there will not be any bilateral meeting with Pakistan,” he said, adding that the External Affairs Minister should attend “as is normal” for India.

HC refuses to accept police’s encounter narrative

Purnima Sah
MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Wednesday grilled the Maharashtra Police over the custodial death of Akshay Shinde, accused in the Badlapur sexual assault case. Shinde was allegedly shot dead in an encounter by the Thane police on Monday.

A day later, on Tuesday, his father, Anna Shinde, approached the High Court through advocate Amit Katarnaware and sought an urgent hearing. The petitioner alleged that his son was killed in a fake encounter and sought a probe by a Special Investigation Team.

“The deceased was not in a state to attempt an escape and did not have the physical capacity to snatch a pistol from an officer. My client believes that his son was killed in view of the forthcoming elections,” Mr. Katarnaware said.

After hearing Chief Public Prosecutor Hiten Venegavkar, for the State of Maharashtra, the judges Bench said, “*Prima facie*, this cannot be trusted. A layman cannot fire a pistol. We cannot believe that four police officers failed to overpower a weak man.”

Dhaka yet to respond to BSF protest note on jawan’s abduction

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

Bangladesh has not yet responded to a protest note lodged by the Border Security Force (BSF) regarding the abduction of a constable by “Bangladeshi miscreants” and his subsequent detention by the Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB) on Tuesday at the Dinajpur border in West Bengal.

A senior BSF official said the jawan was unarmed at the time of incident as India follows a policy of “zero firing” along the Bangladesh border. The incident was reported around 10.30 a.m. on Tuesday and the jawan was released around 4 p.m. the same day.

This is one of the first such incident reported along the Bangladesh border after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina stepped down and left for India on August 5.

‘Serious breach’

Terming the incident a “serious breach of border security”, the BSF in a statement said that a constable who was on routine patrol duty was abducted by a group of 15 to 20 illegal Bangladeshi miscreants who crossed into Indian territory and forcibly took the BSF jawan into Bangladesh where he was put in the custody of the BGB.

The BSF said that it condemns this act of aggression and lodged a formal protest against the actions of the Bangladeshi miscreants. It urged the BGB to instruct its citizens to refrain from such unlawful activities.

‘Input on infiltration by 900 Kuki militants could not be substantiated on the ground’

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

Manipur Security Adviser, DGP urge people not to believe in unverified information

Manipur Security Adviser Kuldiep Singh and Director-General of Police (DGP) Rajiv Singh said in a joint statement on Wednesday that the input regarding the infiltration of 900 trained Kuki militants from Myanmar to carry out attacks on Meitei people on September 28 “could not be substantiated on ground”.

“In view of the recent reactions from different communities regarding input of infiltration of 900 trained Kuki militants from Myanmar to carry out attacks on Meiteis on September 28, it is clarified that the input was verified from different quarters, but it could not be substantiated on ground. There is no basis currently to believe in any such input. However, security forces deployed on the ground are placed on a high alert to protect lives and properties of citizens. All communities are assured of their safety. They are advised not to believe in any rumours or unverified information,” the joint statement said.

The inputs were first shared by Chief Minister N. Biren Singh’s office with the security adviser, the DGP, and the Chief Secretary on September 16, a copy of the leaked letter showed.

On Wednesday, N. Geoffrey, secretary to Mr. Biren Singh, sent another note to the Security Adviser and the DGP stating that the public need not worry as the chances of such attack were “remote”.

The September 16 internal note said, “Reports have been received that over 900 Kuki militants, newly trained in use of drone-based bombs, projectiles, missiles and jungle warfare have entered Manipur from Myanmar. They are reportedly grouped in units of 30 members each and currently scatted in the periphery, and expected to launch coordinated attacks on Meitei villages around September 28.”

BJP MP seeks probe into feedback on Waqf Bill

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

BJP MP Nishikant Dubey has called for a probe into the 1.25 crore submissions received by the Joint Parliamentary Committee scrutinising the Waqf (Amendment) Bill.

Mr. Dubey, a member of the Waqf JPC, suspected the possible role of Pakistan’s ISI and China behind the volume of feedback. The JPC is headed by BJP MP Jagdambika Pal.

Mr. Dubey, in a letter to Mr. Pal, expressed concern over the involvement of “anti-national forces”. He demanded a probe on the geographical locations of the emails received.

Seconding the allegations, Vinod Bansal, spokesperson of VHP, called it “email jihad”.

Date with democracy: Voters at a Srinagar booth during the second phase of the J&K election on Wednesday. IMRAN NISSAR

Defying odds: Long queues at a polling station in Poonch, which has gone through a spurt in militancy recently. ANI

Proud voters: Women show their inked fingers after casting votes at a village near the Line of Control at Nowshera in Rajouri. PTI

Guarding the ballot: A BSF jawan standing guard as voters queue up at a polling station in Srinagar. IMRAN NISSAR

Will mount pressure on govt. to restore Statehood: Rahul in J&K

The Hindu Bureau
JAMMU/SRINAGAR

Intensifying his agitation over the issue of Statehood, Congress leader and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday threatened to wage protests inside and outside Parliament to "force the BJP to grant Jammu and Kashmir Statehood".

"Statehood is your right and your future. The INDIA alliance will build pressure on the BJP-led government to restore the Statehood. If they do not do so, we will storm the Well in Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha and also hit streets across the country," Mr. Gandhi, who spoke at multiple poll rallies in Jammu and north Kashmir, said.

Stating that several States in India have been bifurcated before, Mr. Gandhi said, "This is the first time in history that a State has been turned into a Union Territory. This has never happened in India, it's a matter of shame."

He accused the Centre of downgrading J&K to a Union Territory "to pave way for outsiders to govern and sideline locals". "Affairs of J&K are run by outsiders. The Lieutenant-Governor is doing things at his will," Mr. Gandhi said.

Foreign diplomats tour polling booths in J&K

After visiting stations in Budgam and Srinagar, U.S. diplomat says poll process looks professional; Omar takes exception to Centre's move to bring the 15-member team, terms it 'a guided tour'

The Hindu Bureau
SRINAGAR

First-hand account: Diplomats from various countries at a polling station during the Assembly election in Srinagar on Wednesday. IMRAN NISSAR

In a first, foreign diplomats from 15 countries on Wednesday arrived in Kashmir to observe the electoral process. They expressed satisfaction over the process here after touring several polling booths. However, National Conference (NC) vice-president Omar Abdullah termed it "a guided tour".

"It's a rare opportunity to come to Kashmir and see the electoral process and see democracy in action. And also see another part of India's big year of elections. Election process looks very smooth and very professional. Everything is well set-up. It looks like a very exciting exercise. We are very pleased as diplomats and as visitors to see the process and to learn about how Indian democracy works," U.S. diplomat Jorgen Andrews said.

His statement assumes significance because reports of the U.S. Congress after 2019 were critical of the handling of the situation in Kashmir. These reports mainly focused on "restoring democratic processes in J&K". Therefore, the visit is a major diplomatic victory for the Centre to showcase a peaceful and participatory election process in J&K and form a positive world opinion on Kashmir.

The 15-member team invited by the External Affairs Ministry was allowed to visit multiple polling booths in Budgam and Srinagar districts, where polling was held in 11 constituencies in the second phase.

Besides the U.S., the diplomats were from Mexico, Guyana, South Korea, Somalia, Panama, Singapore, Nigeria, Spain, South Africa, Norway, Tanzania, Rwanda, Algeria, and the Philippines.

"It's very similar to how we conduct elections in Singapore and use government buildings for polling stations for easy access to voters. Our purpose is to observe polling and to see how democracy is working on the ground (in Kashmir) We are grateful to the MEA," Alice Cheng, a Singaporean diplomat, said.

Pink booths

The diplomats also evoked a keen interest in the special pink polling booths set up for female voters in Srinagar. "Pink polling station is very ingenuous. It is a great way to attract more people to come to vote," South Korea diplomat Sang Woo Lim said.

Meanwhile, Mr. Abdullah took exception to the Centre's move to bring foreign diplomats to Kashmir. "The Government of India dismisses comments on J&K by foreign governments as India's internal matter but on the contrary, has invited foreign diplomats as observers to elections," he said. "Why are only guided tours offered to foreign diplomats? Why aren't foreign journalists permitted to cover the event," he asked.

J&K Apni Party chief Altaf Bukhari welcomed the move. "Let them see how peaceful elections are and they could replicate it. See how violence erupts during U.S. elections," he said.

People of Srinagar remain reluctant voters as district records 29.81% turnout

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

By all means: Voters cross the Dal Lake to go to a polling booth during the Assembly election in Srinagar on Wednesday. PTI

People of Srinagar district continued to remain reluctant voters on Wednesday, as evident from a low voter turnout of 29.81% in spite of the high-pitched, violence-free campaigning by parties in the second phase of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly election.

Srinagar, Ganderbal and Budgam are the three districts of the Kashmir Valley that went to the polls on Wednesday. Unlike the long queues in the Kangan constituency of Ganderbal, which recorded 72.18% polling, and Khansahib in Budgam, with 72.04% turnout, according to data available till 11.50 p.m., most booths in the old city saw only a trickle of voters.

"It's a powerless Assembly to vote for. It cannot bring back what we lost on August 5, 2019. Our own parties betrayed and failed us in the past. There is no one to have faith in. Kashmir has witnessed a lot of bloodshed and in return got humiliation and not a dignified solution," Rafi Khan, a resident of te Safakadal area, said. "I see no reason to vote."

The district's poll percentage was 27.9% in the 2014 election. "Srinagar saw an increase of 5% from the voter turnout of the Lok Sabha election [earlier this year]," J&K Chief Electoral Officer P.K. Pole said.

Of the eight Assembly constituencies in the district, Lal Chowk, Eidgah, Central Shalteng, Hazratbal and Zadibal crossed the 30% turnover mark.

Eidgah constituency

A part of the Safakadal area in the Eidgah constituency has borne the brunt of three decades of militancy and street violence as it remains a hub of separatist supporters. Compared with the 2014 Assembly election, Eidgah saw an increase in turnout from 27.79% to 36.95%.

The Habba Kadal constituency saw a mere 19.81% polling as against 21.01% in the 2014 election.

"New Delhi has only added to the sense of alienation by adding another chapter of betrayal in 2019. Our land, jobs and resources were put up for sale. I voted in 2014 with the hope of change. It was only followed by the ending of J&K's special status. Was it justice to the suffering that people of Kashmir faced for three decades? New Delhi reversed the clock to 1931 and took us back to the Dogra Raj," Hamid Ahangar, a shopkeeper from Zaina Kadal, said.

In the Khanyar constituency, voters were enthused to "vote in a new government that can reverse measures taken after 2019". However, the overall response remained subdued, as only 26.08% turned up at the booths. The constituency saw 26.12% polling in the 2014 elections.

In Jat heartland, Modi attacks Cong. over reservation

The Hindu Bureau
GURUGRAM

Narendra Modi

Picking up from where he had left off in Kurukshetra at his first election meeting in Haryana, Prime Minister Narendra Modi again attacked the Congress at a rally at Sonipat in the Jat heartland on Wednesday, accusing the party of opposing reservation and snatching away the rights of the deprived and the oppressed. The Congress, he said, is known for "instability" and "infighting".

Alluding to the Gandhi family, though without naming anyone, Mr. Modi said Prime Ministers from the Congress family had always opposed reservation and even the fourth generation of the family was talking about doing away with it. He said that if Babasaheb Ambedkar had not ensured reservation for the Scheduled Castes, they too would have had to wait for the Congress to be defeated to get their due as the Other Backward Classes had. It was in the "Congress's DNA to oppose reservation and hate reservation", he added.

The BJP, on the other hand, had ensured the true participation of the deprived and the oppressed, Mr. Modi said, adding that his party had made Nayab Saini, who belongs to an OBC community and is "the son of a farmer", the Chief Minister of Haryana.

Mr. Modi raked up the issue of violence against Scheduled Castes families during Congress rule in Haryana, saying atrocities were committed against the community and its women during the rule of Bhupinder Singh Hooda.

In his 50-minute speech, Mr. Modi accused the Congress of fuelling separation and terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and trying to bring back special status under Article 370 to the Union Territory.

He said wherever the Congress was in power, be it in Karnataka, Telangana or Rajasthan earlier, its top leaders, were busy fighting among themselves, sparing little thought for people's problems and issues.

After a decade in power in Haryana, the BJP struggles to fend off anti-incumbency trend

GROUND REPORT

Vikas Vasudeva
LADWA/KAITHAL

Uphill task: Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini being felicitated by the people of Untsal village in Kurukshetra district on Saturday. ANI

As Haryana goes to the polls on October 5, Nayab Singh Saini, 54, who took over as Chief Minister from Manohar Lal earlier this year, has his task cut out in ensuring the BJP retains power in the State for a third term, swimming against what appears to be an undercurrent against the party.

Mr. Saini, who is contesting from the Ladwa constituency in Kurukshetra district, has been holding rallies across the State, promising "transparent, corruption-free", "development-oriented" governance. He is locking horns with the Congress candidate and MLA, Mewa Singh, in his maiden contest in the constituency.

Many challenges

He appears to be facing a challenging battle, with youth, farmers, women, workers and traders in the State airing disenchantment with the BJP. Sections of the electorate continue to be anxious about job opportunities, business challenges, farm distress, inflation, and crime. Issues related to reservation also resonate with the Scheduled Castes. Mr. Saini's supporters, however, tout what they perceive as improvements in infrastructure and governance.

Pawan Kumar, 52, in Ladwa town, is dejected over the lack of jobs. Mr. Kumar, who holds postgraduate degrees in Hindi and journalism, works as a consultant content writer at the University of Delhi.

"Finding it hard to make ends meet, I eventually decided to look for a job outside the State. Since 2019, I have been working in Delhi. The salary is moderate, and I can't afford to take my family with me. If at all there is a suitable and secure job here in my town or nearby, I will not have to face this difficult situation," Mr. Kumar says.

Saini, contesting in Ladwa, promises corruption-free and transparent governance

"If the BJP had given regular jobs or created suitable job opportunities as they claim, then why would people like me have to go to other States?"

Guni Ram, 75, a blacksmith at the main market in Ladwa, is, however, content with the BJP government's performance. "Two of my daughters have secured government jobs. One is working at the local anganwadi and the other is associated with the survey team of a local governance body. I didn't have to pay money to anyone to get them jobs. They [the BJP] have done decent work," he said.

At Thana village in Kurukshetra, an animated discussion is on over tea at a makeshift roadside tea stall. Nana Ram, 52, speaks highly about the BJP's work at the Centre, yet he is unsure of the party's victory.

"They [the BJP] abrogated Article 370 [in Jammu and Kashmir]. It's due to the digital revolution in their regime that my daughter can work from home and is earning a decent income. New roads have come up in the past decade. I get ₹6,000 annually under the Kisan Samman Scheme from the Centre. But I am not sure about the BJP regaining power in the State as there is a sense of change after 10 years of its rule. There is an undercurrent," he says.

The BJP's is trying to win over the Scheduled Castes, who make up over 20% of the State's population, by claiming it has undertaken several initiatives for them.

While the BJP government at the Centre and in Haryana claims to have undertaken pro-people initiatives, the Congress, which is fighting to wrest power back from the BJP in Haryana, has stepped up its campaigning. At a rally in Jagadhri, the Congress's observer, Kewal Singh Pathania, termed the BJP government in Haryana a "failed regime".

In the run-up to the election, several State government employees and pensioners currently under the National Pension Scheme, have been demanding restoration of the Old Pension Scheme. They have started a "vote for OPS" campaign under the banner of the 'Pension Bahali Sangarsh Samiti (Haryana). Vijender Dhariwal, who heads the group, says: "We are urging people to support and vote for political parties that would give us OPS. There are around 2.5 lakh government employees in the State who are covered under the NPS. They and their families are not happy with the BJP."

Haryana will have a Dalit Deputy CM if we win, says Mayawati

The Hindu Bureau
CHANDIGARH

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) president Mayawati on Tuesday said if its alliance with the Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) formed the next government in Haryana, a Deputy Chief Minister would be appointed from the Dalit community.

She was addressing a rally at Uchana in Jind on the occasion of the 111th birth anniversary of former Deputy Prime Minister Devi Lal.

"...after INLD-BSP the government is formed.... a Deputy Chief Minister from the Dalit community will be from the BSP, while another will be from other Backward Classes or upper caste," she said.

Terming the Congress and Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) "anti-reservation" parties, Ms. Mayawati said, "It is necessary to remove such parties from power to save reservation." She also demanded that the Union government conduct the caste census.

"... the ideology of Congress is anti-Dalit and it is necessary to teach them a lesson in the election... Neither BJP nor Congress has fulfilled the quota of reservation," the BSP president said.

INBRIEF

Rain lashes Mumbai after long break; local train services hit

After a long hiatus, heavy rain returned to lash Mumbai and suburbs on Wednesday, inundating low-lying areas, stopping local trains on tracks between Kurla and Thane stations and stranding passengers even as traffic crawled on roads. The IMD upgraded its orange alert for Mumbai city and its neighbouring districts to a red alert, valid till 8.30 a.m. on Thursday. The Met department has issued a red alert for Palghar and an orange one for Thane, Raigad, Mumbai and Pune for Thursday. An orange alert has been issued for Nashik and Dhule districts in north Maharashtra. Schools and colleges in Mumbai and its suburbs will remain shut on Thursday, officials said. PTI

HDFC Bank employee dies at work in Lucknow

A woman employee of HDFC Bank in Lucknow died at work on Tuesday. Sadaf Fatima, posted as an additional deputy vice-president at HDFC Bank's Vibhuti Khand branch in Lucknow, fell unconscious around 3 p.m. on Tuesday. She later passed away. The body has been sent for a post-mortem examination. It is suspected that she suffered a heart attack. Her colleagues said she was under stress due to work pressure. Opposition parties blamed the BJP government's "failed economic policies" for work pressure and stress in government and private jobs. Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav said the death of the employee was a symbol of the "current economic pressure in the country".

'India sharing information between Russia, Ukraine'

External Affairs Minister says govt. is speaking to both sides, hoping to usher in peace; in reference to Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, he says India is not trying to control political dynamics of its neighbours

Sriram Lakshman
NEW YORK

The Russia-Ukraine war is not going to be resolved on the battlefield, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said on Tuesday, adding that the government was speaking to both sides to see if it could do anything to hasten the end of the war and initiate serious negotiations between the two countries.

"This is a kind of exploration that we have been doing. I mean, it's not that we have a peace plan," Mr. Jaishankar said during a discussion at the Asia Society Policy Institute in New York.

The Minister said the government was sharing conversations it had with one party with the other. "My sense is both sides appreciate it," he said, adding that there were not many countries and leaders who had the willingness or ability to engage both sides.

His remarks came a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenksyy along the fringes of the United Nations General Assembly session. Mr. Modi was in Kyiv at the end of August, after which he had had conversations with both Russian President Vladimir Putin and U.S. President Joe Biden.

National Security Adviser Ajit Doval had also met with Mr. Putin on the sidelines of the BRICS NSAs meeting in St. Petersburg earlier this month.

Paving way: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar during an event at the Asia Society Policy Institute in New York. ELSA RUIZ/ASIA SOCIETY

Unconditional aid

Speaking about ties with neighbouring countries, Mr. Jaishankar said India was not engaged in financial assistance and projects with Sri Lanka and Bangladesh with a view to controlling their internal political dynamics.

He said the financial assistance of around $4.5 billion that India has given Sri Lanka was not offered with conditionalities, referring to a bailout given to Sri Lanka at the peak of the island nation's economic crisis in 2022.

"It was not that we had a political conditionality which accompanied that. I mean, we were doing it as a good neighbour who did not want to see that kind of economic meltdown at our doorstep," he said, responding to a question about an apparent lack of benefit in return for unconditional aid provided to Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

"So, I think what happens politically in Sri Lanka, that's for their politics to work with at the end of the day," the Minister said, adding that it was not India's intention to suggest that the political dynamics in its neighbouring countries ought to adhere to what was better for India.

The questioner had asked about attacks on minorities, specifically Hindus and Buddhists, in Bangladesh, after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina administration. The Modi administration has previously raised the issue of attacks on Hindu minorities and temples in other countries with the governments in these countries.

The case of Bangladesh was a "little bit different", as per Mr. Jaishankar, and India had also benefited from joint projects.

"So, I would urge you not to be deterministic about it, he said, adding, "It's not as though India is seeking to control every political move of every neighbour."

Centre estimates record production of foodgrains in 2023-24

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Union Agriculture Ministry has estimated a record production of foodgrains for this financial year. But the production of pulses, oil seeds, and sugar cane is likely to be lower than in the last fiscal, shows the fourth and final estimates of production of major agricultural crops for 2023-24 released here on Wednesday.

Prepared on the basis of information received from the States, the Centre estimated a record foodgrains production of 3,322.98 lakh tonnes (LT), which is higher by 26.11 LT than the last financial year's 3,296.87 LT. An increase in the production of rice, wheat, and millet resulted in an overall increase in foodgrain production.

Total rice production is estimated at 1,378.25 LT, which is higher by 20.7 LT than the previous year's 1,357.55 LT. Wheat production is estimated at 1,132.92 LT, higher by 27.38 LT than the previous year's 1,105.54 LT. As much as 175.72 LT of millets are estimated to be cultivated during this year as against 173.21 LT during the previous year.

Pulses production is set to decrease to 242.46 LT from 260.58 LT in the last fiscal. The oilseeds output is likely to drop to 396.69 LT from 413.55 LT in 2022-23. Rapeseed and mustard production is likely to increase marginally. These estimates are based on the information received from the States and Union Territories, the Ministry added.

Moisture stress

The Centre said during 2023-24, there were drought-like conditions in southern States and Maharashtra, and prolonged dry spells during August especially in Rajasthan. "The moisture stress from the drought also affected the rabi season. This mainly affected production of pulses, coarse cereals, soya bean and cotton," the Union Agriculture Ministry said in a release.

Sugarcane production is set to decrease to 4,531.58 LT from 4,905.33 LT and cotton output will be 325.22 lakh bales (1 bale equals 170 kg) from 336.6 lakh bales in 2022-23.

Tur production estimate is 34.17 LT, and for gram, it is 110.39 LT and for groundnut, the estimate is 101.80 LT.

For soya bean, the production could be 130.62 LT, and for Rapeseed, and Mustard, it is 132.59 LMT, a record according to the government.

Why is Adani Ports getting concessions, asks Congress

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Wednesday raised the issue of "concessions" being granted to Adani Ports so that it can gain "control" over the Mundhra, Hazira and Dahej ports in Gujarat for 75 years on a Build-Operate-Own-Transfer (BOOT) basis.

In a post on X, Congress general secretary (communications) Jairam Ramesh said, "BOOT has become LOOT". He also referred to his remarks in August, in which he had alleged that the Gujarat government was helping Adani Ports to "secure a monopoly" on the State's port sector.

"Will the Modani A3G (Adani Asks, Adani Gets) force strike again? The BOOT that has become the LOOT," Mr. Ramesh asked.

PM must clarify his stance on remarks by Kangana: Congress

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi over BJP MP Kangana Ranaut's statement that the three repealed farm laws should be brought back, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday asked Mr. Modi to clarify whether he was opposed to the remark or was "up to some mischief".

Despite Ms. Ranaut withdrawing her statement, the Congress asked the BJP to expel the actor-turned-politician if it did not agree with her remarks.

"The BJP people keep testing ideas. They ask someone to voice an idea among the people and then they see the reaction. This is what has happened,

Rahul Gandhi

one of their MPs has talked about reviving the three black farm laws. Modi*ji* you must clarify, whether you are against this or you are again up to some mischief," Mr. Gandhi said in a video posted on his X handle.

The BJP distanced itself from the statement made by Ms. Ranaut.

BJP spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia on Tuesday said it was a "personal statement by her. Therefore, we disapprove of this statement".

Journal 'retracts' controversial paper published by BHU on Covaxin safety

R. Prasad
CHENNAI

The journal *Drug Safety* has "retracted" a paper published on May 13 by researchers of Banaras Hindu University, on the safety of COVID-19 vaccine Covaxin.

The paper was a prospective observational study conducted from January 2022 to August 2023, where the recipients of the vaccine were interviewed over the telephone about the long-term adverse events of special interest (AESIs) one year after vaccination.

The retraction notice put up on Tuesday reads: "The Editor has retracted this article as he no longer has confidence in the conclusions as stated in the article. Post-publication review concluded that the reported adverse events of special interest (AESIs) were presented in a way that could lead to ambiguous or incorrect interpretations regarding the relationship with the BBV152 vaccine. Given these findings, the Editor and the publisher have decided that this article should be removed on public health grounds."

Bharat Biotech has filed a defamation case against the authors and the editor.

While criticising the authors for the "poorly designed" study, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) on May 18 wrote to the editor to retract the paper that "implicitly makes conclusions about the vaccine safety that are not supported by evidence". But the paper was not retracted as demanded by the ICMR. Besides criticising the study for its limitations, Bharat Biotech also filed a defamation case against the authors and the editor of the journal. In the prayer of the defamation notice, Bharat Biotech wanted the journal to take down the "defamatory research study" and a "permanent injunction" against the authors and the editor from "further publishing defamatory and flawed studies" on Covaxin. Bharat Biotech also wanted ₹5 crore for the "loss and injury caused by the defamatory research study".

Contrary to the claim by the journal that the paper has been "retracted" – where the original paper is still available on the journal website with a retracted watermark appearing on each page of the paper – the original paper has been removed from the website with only the "retraction" notice mentioning the reasons available.

"That the paper has been removed from the website instead of a retraction watermark being added to the original paper suggests that the removal of the paper was due to the defamation case and not due to scientific reasons as the notice mentions," Amar Jesani, editor of the *Indian Journal of Medical Ethics,* said. In an open letter to Bharat Biotech and the Director-General of ICMR, over 600 scientists, researchers, ethicists, doctors, patients, and civil society members had said that the defamation suit will lead to a "chilling effect on researchers.

Eight children drown during festival in Aurangabad

The Hindu Bureau
PATNA

Eight children, seven of them girls aged 10 to 16, drowned in Aurangabad district of Bihar on Wednesday evening while taking bath in ponds on the occasion of *Jitiya,* a festival in which mothers fast the entire day for the well-being of their children.

Four of the children drowned in Kusha village, while four drowned in Ithat village. Two children were rescued by villagers.

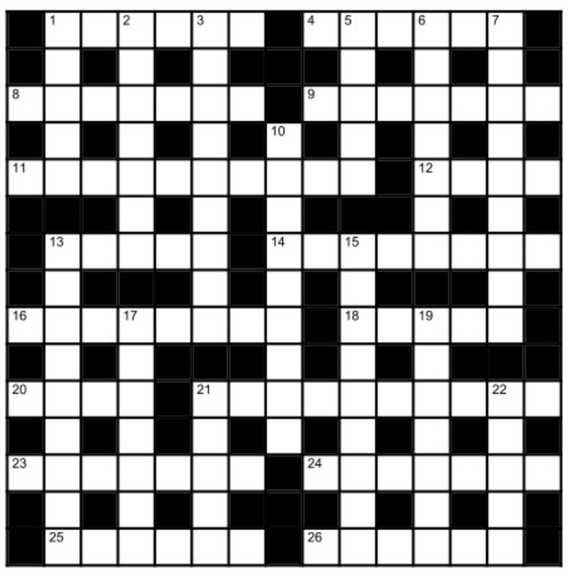
"Post-mortem examination is being done after which bodies will be handed over to the families," Auranganbad District Magistrate Shrikant Shastree said. Chief Minister Nitish Kumar expressed grief over the incident and announced ex-gratia of ₹4 lakh each to the families.

TH CROSSWORD + 14290

(set by Bruno)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Rough path leading to university overlaid with tar, essentially (6)
4 Backpain torture? (6)
8 A cobalt alloy that's required for research (3,4)
9 Making obscure note, following loss of tip (7)
11 Device in poetry - man bent 'em artistically around beginning of joke (10)
12 Square shiny fabric (4)
13 Peter has copyright for manuscript? (5)
14 Accused criminal controlling union staff (8)
16 Intense work recruiting employment for roof (8)
18 Spring cellar (5)
20 Some romcom action that can leave you senseless (4)
21 Toilet details primarily observed in stairway that's seen around stadia (10)
23 Temperature at Russian capital's a problem (7)
24 Counterattack from behind while cycling with soldiers hiding (7)
25 Small-time spy promoted attack (6)
26 Sticky man beginning to move mud around (6)

Down

1 Drink in train (5)
2 Source of light's a radical device (7)
3 Arts pattern? (9)
5 Mum also returning fire (5)
6 Sweet piece of orange licorice (7)
7 Lemon and nuts cocktail - snapper's accessory? (4,5)
10 Copper let loose black and white film developer (9)
13 Image of plan, right away attracted spirited (9)
15 American nuclear physicist's dead - greedy husband's sick (5,4)
17 Socialist guerilla avoiding Rhode Island while on the run, one may be found along the coast (7)
19 Same University class (7)
21 Hint of forced smile, briefly shot for movies (5)
22 Sacred monument finally annexed in an intense manner (5)

SUDOKU

2	3				4			
	8							9
		4			8	7		
		9			5		7	8
	5						3	
7	2		1			4		
		5	4			1		
6							2	
			3				9	4

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle

	S		F		K		R		L				C	
D	O	M	A	I	N	N	A	M	E	S		B	O	X
	M		Q		O		U		M		A		G	
I	B	I	S		B	A	N	J	O		V	E	N	T
	R				S		C		N		E		A	
N	E	E	D	Y		S	H	I	P	W	R	E	C	K
	R		E				Y		I		S			
T	O	M	A	T	O				E	M	I	N	E	M
			D		A		N				O		L	
C	H	A	L	U	K	Y	A	S		I	N	D	E	X
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Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

9	1	4	8	6	3	5	2	7
3	6	8	2	7	5	4	9	1
2	5	7	1	9	4	6	8	3
7	2	6	3	5	8	1	4	9
1	3	5	9	4	6	8	7	2
8	4	9	7	1	2	3	5	6
6	7	1	5	8	9	2	3	4
5	9	2	4	3	1	7	6	8
4	8	3	6	2	7	9	1	5

FAITH

Love is God

The greatness of Saivism is enlightened by Sekkizhar, who, in his work *Peria Puranam,* also known as *Thiruthondar Puranam*, had described the story of the lives of the 63 apostles (Nayanmars). Lanka Sri Jeyaraj said in a discourse that Saivism is not against any religion; instead, it embraces all other religions. The apophthegm is *"Thennadudaya Sivane potri, Ennatirkum thalaiva potri"* (Glory to the lord of the South, lord of the universe).

Sekkizhar had prayed to Lord Siva to bless him in composing the work, and the legend has it that Lord Siva Himself provided the first word of the first poem, *"Ulagamelam"*. The syllable "OM" consists of three letters: A, U, and M. One meaning of the letter U is everlasting. Poet Kambar starts with *"ulagam yavaium"*, and Nakkerar starts with *"ulagam uvappa"*, which indicates that these works are permanent. It ends with M. In other letters, A is hidden; hence, *Peria Puranam* is considered the embodiment of "OM", the sacred symbol. The life sketches of all the apostles depict that a person can develop devotion through love and affection for God. Saivism teaches people the importance of showing love to all living beings. The pinnacle of love and affection is exhibited in *Thiruthondar Puranam*. *"Anbe Sivam"* (Love is God) is the "Taraka Mantra" from which the people derive the blessings of Lord Siva.

INBRIEF

Mahindra prices Thar Roxx 4x4 from ₹18.79 lakh

Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. on Wednesday said that the introductory price for the 4x4 variants of the Thar Roxx would start from ₹18.79 lakh (ex-showroom). The top-end variant has been priced at ₹22.49 lakh (ex-showroom), the company said. Thar Roxx, powered by a 2.2L mHawk diesel engine, comes in two power configurations. The 4x4 MT option delivers 111.9 kW and 330 Nm of torque, while the 4x4 AT boasts 128.6 kW and 370 Nm of torque.

TVS Holdings gets CCI nod to buy Home Credit India stake

TVS Holdings Ltd., formerly Sundaram-Clayton Ltd., has received the Competition Commission of India's nod for the proposed acquisition of 80.74% of equity stake of Home Credit India Finance Pvt. Ltd. On Tuesday, the CCI approved the proposed acquisition of 80.74% of Home Credit India Finance from Netherlands-based Home Credit India B.V., and Czech Republic based Home Credit International A.S., TVS Holdings said in a regulatory filing.

Coromandel International to raise stake in Senegal miner

Agriculture solutions company Coromandel International is acquiring an additional 8.82% equity stake in Baobab Mining and Chemicals Corporation (BMCC) for $3.84 million, which will take its overall shareholding in the Senegal-based rock phosphate miner to 53.8%. Besides the investment, of about ₹32 crore, the Murugappa Group firm said it will also be infusing $6.5 million loan (₹54 crore) to fund expansion projects and meet working capital requirements.

SC questions BCCI's 'private deal' with Byju's promoter

Chief Justice Chandrachud asks how one creditor can 'walk away' with ₹158 cr. 'when there is debt of ₹15,000 cr.'; apex court hints that it may return the dispute to the NCLAT for fresh adjudication

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday questioned whether the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) can be allowed to strike a "personal agreement" with embattled edtech firm Byju's promoter and "walk away" with its money.

"When there is a debt of ₹15,000 crore, how can any one creditor say 'look, I will walk away with my money'," Chief Justice of India (CJI) D.Y. Chandrachud wondered at the hearing of an appeal filed by U.S.-based creditor Glas Trust Company LLC against a judgment of the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) permitting Byju's to pay a settlement amount of ₹158 crore to the BCCI. "How can a private agreement be struck like that with just one creditor?" the Chief Justice asked.

The BCCI, represented by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, had submitted that the ₹158 crore was offered by Riju Raveendran, Byju's brother, from his personal assets.

A three-judge Bench headed by the CJI indicated that the NCLAT may not have applied its mind while closing the insolvency proceedings against Byju's. The Supreme Court hinted that it may return the dispute to the NCLAT for fresh adjudication.

Under the spotlight

SC questions cricket board's "personal agreement" with the edtech firm allowing it to "walk away" with its money

- U.S.-based creditor Glas Trust Company LLC has filed appeal against NCLAT ruling
- BCCI submits ₹158 crore was offered by Riju Raveendran, Byju's brother, from his personal assets
- Bench hints NCLAT may not have applied its mind while closing insolvency proceedings against Byju's

Bharti to flag spam calls and messages

The Hindu Bureau
GURUGRAM

Bharti Airtel has said it will mark suspected spam calls and messages for all smartphone users on its network from Thursday.

CEO Gopal Vittal told journalists that the company had been working in "confidential stealth" to develop this solution, which he said had accurately flagged 97% of spam calls and over 99% of spam texts during testing, by analysing the behaviour of the suspected spammers.

Flagged calls will have "suspected spam" as the caller name on smartphones, and suspected spam texts will have the same term prefixed before the SMS. Bharti's announcement differs from the Caller Name Presentation (CNAP) proposal being piloted by the Department of Telecommunications.

Gopal Vittal

TRAI bats for IP links to boost voice quality

Aroon Deep
NEW DELHI

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) is urging telecom operators to improve call quality by establishing Internet Protocol (IP) links between networks, officials said.

TRAI's push would significantly improve the vast majority of calls placed from smartphones.

Since the advent of 4G networks, and associated technologies such as voice over LTE (VoLTE), subscribers of the same mobile network enjoyed high-quality audio calls, typically marked "HD" on phones. Despite huge leaps in the quality of smartphone hardware and advances in telecom infrastructure, calls between subscribers of various networks are of poor quality.

"The reason is [while] in India we have almost 79% 4G or 5G IP networks, network providers are interconnecting networks on old TDM-based networks," Tejpal Singh, TRAI quality of service advisor, said, referring to time-division multiplexing, a pre-digital technology used to carry multiple voice calls over a single line.

ADB raises inflation view on food, less sanguine on early rate cut

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Citing elevated food prices, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Wednesday raised its projection for India's average retail inflation in 2024-25 marginally to 4.7% from 4.6% estimated earlier, even as it retained its GDP growth hopes for the country at 7% for this year and 7.2% in 2025-26.

While some agencies expect the Reserve Bank of India to start slashing interest rates as early as October, the ADB is not as sanguine. Monetary policy is expected to become less restrictive but not as soon as expected, it asserted.

"If improved supply succeeds in moderating food price increases, the central bank will likely start lowering its policy rates in 2024-25, which will improve prospects for bank credit expansion," ADB said in its latest Asia Development Outlook report.

ADB averred the near-term risks to India's growth outlook are balanced, and though the GDP growth slowed to 6.7% in the April to June quarter, it is expected to accelerate in the coming quarters with improvement in agriculture and a largely robust outlook for industry and services.

ADB noted industrial growth in India slowed somewhat as rising input prices cut manufacturing margins. However, it expects La Nina to aid countries like India log huge increases in farm output.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	WEDNESDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	85,170	0.30
US Dollar	83.58	0.05
Gold	77,850	1.16
Brent oil	73.92	-1.32

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	3105.10	11.20
Adani Ports	1452.55	-4.10
Apollo Hosp	7133.45	11.45
Asian Paints	3244.75	-3.65
Axis Bank	1268.10	28.55
Bajaj Auto	12397.25	-46.40
Bajaj Finserv	1928.50	23.85
Bajaj Finance	7623.90	69.70
Bharti Airtel	1760.40	3.75
BPCL	339.80	0.65
Britannia Ind	6180.30	-22.85
Cipla	1643.20	5.65
Coal India	505.30	1.00
Divis Lab	5394.30	18.50
Dr Reddys Lab	6691.45	41.10
Eicher Motors	4895.25	18.35
Grasim Ind	2662.00	42.70
HCL Tech	1782.40	6.80
HDFC Bank	1779.10	11.05
HDFC Life	716.55	-4.15
Hero MotoCorp	6088.30	-38.00
Hindalco	718.45	0.60
Hind Unilever	2948.95	-1.60
ICICI Bank	1323.85	5.25
IndusInd Bank	1439.50	-8.80
Infosys	1895.30	-3.30
ITC	517.55	2.30
JSW Steel	982.65	-7.05
Kotak Bank	1897.95	-16.75
L&T	3793.85	2.25
LTIMindtree Ltd.	6102.55	-241.55
M&M	3091.05	16.75
Maruti Suzuki	12785.30	46.70
NestleIndia	2697.35	0.95
NTPC	436.10	8.00
ONGC	298.70	-0.75
PowerGrid Corp	363.75	13.70
Reliance Ind	2987.90	9.15
SBI Life	1863.60	-0.75
State Bank	793.10	-5.15
Shriram Finance Ltd.	3524.05	7.75
Sun Pharma	1870.55	2.45
TataConsumerProduct	1189.60	-22.05
Tata Motors	963.60	-13.70
Tata Steel	161.66	1.13
TCS	4274.75	3.45
Tech Mahindra	1602.75	-34.35
Titan	3737.25	-47.65
UltraTech Cement	11816.30	54.65
Wipro	536.20	-3.35

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on September 25

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	83.39	83.71
Euro	93.30	93.66
British Pound	111.53	111.96
Japanese Yen (100)	57.83	58.05
Chinese Yuan	11.87	11.92
Swiss Franc	98.20	98.59
Singapore Dollar	64.89	65.15
Canadian Dollar	62.08	62.32
Malaysian Ringitt	20.19	20.29
Australian Dollar	57.34	57.56

Source:Indian Bank

Australia, India push forward on CECA talks

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Trade ministers of India and Australia held talks on Wednesday to assess the progress on negotiations towards a full-fledged free trade deal, about 20 months since an early harvest bilateral pact called the Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) came into effect.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal, who co-chaired a meeting of the India-Australia Joint Ministerial Commission with Australia's Trade and Tourism Minister Don Farrell, said talks focused on strengthening trade ties to achieve the countries' shared goal of $100 billion in bilateral trade by 2030.

Since the early harvest deal, almost $30 billion worth Australian exports have entered India either with zero or lower tariffs than "any of our competitors", with agriculture exports to India rising 60% to $1.6 billion, Mr. Farrell said. For Australian consumers, the deal has translated into "savings at checkouts worth around $225 million, thanks to lower tariffs on products coming from India", he added.

"We reviewed ECTA implementation, discussed progress on the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement," Mr. Goyal said.

Mr. Farrell said Australia has much to offer, particularly in agriculture, and mooted tariff cuts by India for produce like chickpeas, pistachios and wine. However, noting India's concerns, he added "where issues are difficult, we understand, and are not going to make life difficult."

Gold loans to reach ₹15 lakh crore mark by March 2027: ICRA

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Bank GL growth was driven by agriculture loans backed by gold, which grew at CAGR of 26% in FY20-FY24

The organised gold loan (GL) business of banks and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) is projected to exceed ₹10 lakh crore in the current financial year and ₹15 lakh crore by March 2027, rating agency ICRA Ltd. said in a report.

It said the NBFCs currently dominating in retail gold loans would expand at 17-19% in FY25. Overall organised GL expanded at a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 25% over the period FY20-FY24, driven by banks, which expanded these loans at a higher CAGR of 26%, while the NBFCs expanded theirs at 18%.

"Bank GL growth was driven by agriculture loans backed by gold jewellery, which grew at a CAGR of 26% during FY20-FY24, while their retail GLs grew by 32% on a lower base. Consequently, the share of the NBFCs reduced during this period, which were largely focussed on retail GLs for consumption or business purposes," it said.

"Public sector banks (PSBs) accounted for about 63% of the overall GL in March 2024, up from 54% in March 2019, while the NBFC and private banks' shares moderated by equal measure during this period," it added.

Ministry notifies QCO for medical textiles

The Hindu Bureau
COIMBATORE

The Ministry of Textiles has notified the Medical Textiles (Quality Control) Order, 2023.

The order will come into effect from October 1, 2024. The regulation establishes quality standards for critical medical textile products, including sanitary napkins, baby diapers, reusable sanitary pads, and dental bibs.

Since small-scale enterprises and self-help groups will face challenges, they are exempted from the QCO, the Ministry said.

All products falling under this QCO will require a Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) licence to manufacture, import, distribution, sell, hire, lease, store, or display products for sale, it added.

SEBI approves IPOs of Hyundai Motor India and Swiggy

The SEBI has approved Hyundai Motor India Ltd.'s ₹25,000-crore IPO and food and grocery delivery major Swiggy's ₹10,000-crore IPO, people familiar with the development said on Wednesday. PTI

Walk in Interview for Sports Medicine Specialists
(DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS GOVT. OF PUNJAB)

Sports Department Punjab invites eligible candidates for appearing in the interviews for the following posts under the Punjab Sports Medical Cadre (Group A) Service Rules, 2024:-

Sr. No.	Name of Posts	No. of Posts
1	Director	01
2	Joint Director	01
3	Deputy Director	01

The applicant should bring biodata, originals and self attested copies of qualification, experience or any other relevant documents and one passport size photograph. Walk-in-interview will be held on 16-10-2024 at 09.00 A.M. in office of Special Chief Secretary, Sports & Youth Services, Room No. 227, Punjab Mini Civil Secretariat-2, Sector-9, Chandigarh. For required qualification, experience, terms of appointment and salary etc. please download "Service Rules - Departmental Cadre, Medical Cadre & Outstanding Cadre. 2024" by clicking on 'Download' button at top right corner of home page of website **www.pbsports.punjab.gov.in**. where it is at no. 19 in the list. For any assistance/clarification please contact undersigned, **Dr. S P Anandh Kumar (9417384414)**.

Special Secretary,
NA/12/25680/2023/38051 **Sports & Youth Services, Punjab**

INDIAN COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

National Argumentative Essay Writing Competition for Young Scholars

Topic

Simultaneous Elections in India: One Nation, One Election

ICSSR invites entries in the genre of argumentative essay on **"Simultaneous Elections in India: One Nation, One Election"** in three categories:

1. Undergraduate Students **2. Postgraduate Students** **3. Ph.D. Scholars**

Opening Date: **24th September 2024**
Closing Date: **8th October 2024**
Entry accepted in both Hindi and English
For more details please visit **www.icssr.org**

Prizes (for each category)
First prize: ₹15,000
Second prize: ₹10,000
Third prize: ₹7,500

RajCOMP Info Services Limited (RISL)
C-Block, 1st Floor, Yojana Bhawan, Tilak Marg, C-Scheme, Jaipur

RISL invites e-bids from the eligible bidders for the following:

NIB No./ Date/ Unique bid no.	Particulars	Estimated Cost/ EMD	Start of sale /Last date
F4.3(597)/RISL/ Pur/2024/4749 Dated : 20.09.2024 UBN No. : RIS2425GLOB00041	Selection of Technology partner for Operation and Maintenance Support of AG interface (IM-Server) Project.	Rs. 4.16 Crores / Rs. 8.32 lacs	20/09/2024 14/10/2024

Details can be seen on the websites **http://risl.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in, http://doitc.rajasthan.gov.in.** Bids are to be submitted through **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in**
Raj.Samwad/C/24/5670

Trivandrum Engineering Science & Technology (TrEST) Research Park
(A Government of Kerala undertaking)
Email: trestpark@kerala.gov.in

Tender Id: 2024_TrEST_691625_1
Bids are invited from reputed consultants for preparation of Conceptual Master Plan and DPR for setting up of EV Park. Bid submission end date **21.10.2024, 10.00 am.**
For more details: 0471-2598555
Website: www.trestpark.org
(D3/572/2024/I&PRD) **Sd/- Chief Executive Officer**

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD.
Regd. Office : PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala-147001.
Corporate Identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033813 :
Website : www.pspcl.in (Contact No. 96461-22185)

Tender Enquiry No. 326/SS(D)-II **Dated : 23.09.2024**

Dy. CE/Substation Design/ TS Organization, PSPCL, C-1, Shakti Vihar, PSPCL, Patiala invites E-tender for Design, Manufacture, Testing, Supply & Delivery of 359 nos. 66kV Current Transformers (CTs) of various types/ sizes/ratios. For detailed NIT & Tender Specification, please refer to **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in** from 24.09.24 (09:00AM onwards).

Note: Corrigendum and amendments, if any, will be published online at **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in**

C - 742/24 **76155/12/3495/2023/38040**

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY e-Tender Notice

Tender No : 27/2024-25/PHC/KNR(Re-Tender) KIIFB - WRD - 025 - 23 - Water Supply Project- Peravoor, Muzhakkunnu and Ayyankunnu in Kannur District - Package II - General Civil Work-Construction of Intake well, Water Treatment Plant, **EMD :** Rs. 5,00,000/-, **Tender Fee :** Rs.19518/-, **Last Date for Submitting Tender : 10-10-2024, 03:00 pm, Phone :** 0497 2705902.
Website : **www.kwa.kerala.gov.in, www.etenders.kerala.gov.in**
Superintending Engineer
KWA-JB-GL-6-633-2024-25 **PH Circle, Kannur**

OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER, PHED, REGION AJMER
PHONE NO. 0145-2624748 **Email-aceregionajmer@gmail.com**
No. F.()/Ar. Tonk/2024-2025/7561-7610 Dated : 20/09/24
NOTICE INVITING TENDERS FOR WORKS
Bids for the work of Operation & Maintance of Reg. WSS of 55 villages and their dhanies (for 7 year O&M period) from Todaraisingh PS on Transmission Main II under sub division Todaraisingh. (NIT No.02/2024-25 ; Estimated Cost Rs. 459.33 Lacs) are invited from interested bidders up to 14.10.2024 Other particulars of the Bid may be visited on the procurement portal (http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.raj.nic.in) of the state.
UBN No. PHE2425WSOB04755 **(Devraj Solanki)**
NIB No. PHE2425A2149 **Additional Chief Engineer**
DIPR/C/9028/2024 **PHED, Region, Ajmer**

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT
MADURAI HIGHWAYS, PROJECTS CIRCLE
TENDER NOTICE
T.N. No. 04/2024-25/SDO, dated: 24.09.2024

For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu, **Percentage Tender under two cover system through online only** will be received upto **28.10.2024 15.00 hours** by the Superintending Engineer (H), Projects , Madurai Circle for the work of "Formation of Bypass to Bodinayakanur town from Anaikaraipatty Vilakku at km.197/2 Of NH 85 To B.Dharmathupatty at km.27/10 of SH100 (km.0/0-3/8)" pertaining to Madurai (H), Projects Division.

Details of work, approximate value of work, EMD, availability of tender documents and all other details are available from **04.10.2024** onwards in the Government website **https://tntenders.gov.in**. If any changes/corrections in the tender, it will be published in the above Government website only.

Superintending Engineer (H),
DIPR / 3858 / TENDER / 2024 **Projects, Madurai Circle.**

ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE COMPANY KERALA LTD
A Government of Kerala Undertaking
Old PWD Store Building, PMG, Vikas Bhavan P.O, Thiruvananthapuram - 695 033.
STATE ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (SRIP)
TENDER NOTICE FOR INDEPENDENT ENGINEER SERVICE FOR PACKAGE - A & B
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

RICK Ltd invites proposals from experienced firms for the Independent Engineer services for the Operation & Maintenance of State Highways and Major District Roads - Package A (Kasargode District) Total length 25.00 Km & Package B (Kottayam and Thiruvananthapuram District Total length 58.00 km) . The RFP will be invited through e-tendering. The interested consultancy firms may download the RFP from e-tender portal of Government of Kerala **http:etenders.kerala.gov.in (Tender ID 2024_RICK_690875_1)**. Last Date of submission of e-tender documents is **10.10.2024 at 5 PM**.
Email: **srip.rickpwd2012@gmail.com,** Ph: **0471 - 2323259**
Dated: 13.09.2024 **Sd/- MANAGING DIRECTOR**
D3/578/2024/I&PRD

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD.
Regd. Office : PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala-147001.
Corporate Identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033813 :
Website : www.pspcl.in (Contact No. 96461-22185)

Tender Enquiry No. 327/SS-II(D)

Dy. CE/Substation Design/ TS Organization, C-1, Shakti Vihar, PSPCL, Patiala invites E-tender for Manufacture, Testing, Supply & Delivery of **194 nos. 66kV Potential Transformers**. For detailed NIT & Tender Specification, please refer to **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in** from 26.09.24 (09:00AM onwards).

Note: Corrigendum and amendments, if any, will be published online at **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in**

C - 743/24 **76155/12/3496/2023/38041**

TEHRAN

Iran parliament blocks Sunni Vice-President's candidature

AFP

The Iranian parliament on Wednesday blocked the appointment of a politician from the Sunni minority as Vice-President. In August, President Masoud Pezeshkian had announced the appointment of Abdolkarim Hosseinzadeh as Vice-President for rural development and disadvantaged areas, citing his "valuable experience". AFP

WASHINGTON

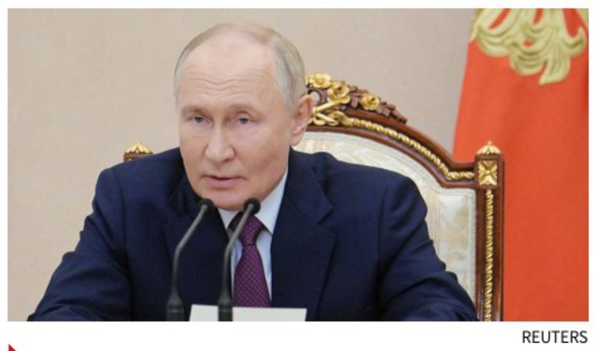
Trump cites U.S. intelligence, says Iran poses 'big threats' to his life

AP

Donald Trump said there were "big threats" on his life posed by Iran after the Republican presidential candidate's campaign team said U.S. intelligence warned him of "real and specific" threats from Tehran. "Big threats on my life by Iran. The entire U.S. Military is watching and waiting," he wrote on his Truth Social platform. AFP

MOSCOW

'Nuclear power that supports an attack on Russia is an aggressor'



REUTERS

Russian President Vladimir Putin said a nuclear power supporting another country's attack on Russia will be considered a participant in aggression under a new version of Moscow's nuclear rules. This follows his warning that allowing Kyiv to use the West's long-range weapons would mean that Russia and NATO are at war. AP

MANILA

U.S. missile system to remain in the Philippines despite China's alarm

AFP

American and Filipino security officials have agreed to keep a U.S. mid-range missile system in the northern Philippines indefinitely to boost deterrence despite China's expressions of alarm. The U.S. Army had transported the Typhon missile system to the northern Philippines as part of combat exercises in April. AP

23 killed in Israeli strikes across Lebanon

Agence France-Presse
BEIRUT

Lebanon said 23 people were killed and dozens injured in Israeli strikes across Lebanon on Wednesday, the third day of major Israeli raids in the country as fighting with Hezbollah has intensified.

The attacks in Lebanon included two rare strikes on the villages of Joun and Maaysra – mountain areas outside Hezbollah's traditional strongholds in the country's south and east.

Israel's Army later said it was conducting strikes in Nabatiyeh in south Lebanon, with the state-run National News Agency reporting an Israeli strike partly damaged a hospital there.

Hezbollah's missile targets Tel Aviv in its deepest strike

Military intercepts the surface-to-surface missile, which sets off air-raid sirens in Tel Aviv and across central Israel; it responds by striking the site in southern Lebanon where missile came from

Associated Press
TEL AVIV

Hezbollah hurled dozens of projectiles into Israel early on Wednesday, including a missile aimed at Tel Aviv that was the militant group's deepest strike yet and marked a further escalation after Israeli strikes on Lebanon killed hundreds of people.

The Israeli military said it intercepted the surface-to-surface missile, which set off air-raid sirens in Tel Aviv and across central Israel. There were no reports of casualties or damage. The military said it struck the site in southern Lebanon where the missile was launched.

Proof of strike: A security official holding the remnants of a rocket at the site of a strike in Israel's Safed on Wednesday. AFP

Fleeing families have flocked to Beirut and the coastal city of Sidon, sleeping in schools turned into shelters, as well as in cars, parks and along the beach. Some sought to leave the country, causing a traffic jam at the border with Syria.

Hezbollah said it fired a Qader 1 ballistic missile targeting the headquarters of Israel's Mossad intelligence agency, which it blames for a recent string of targeted killings of its top commanders and for an attack last week in which explosives hidden in pagers and walkie-talkies killed dozens of people and wounded thousands, including many Hezbollah members.

Hezbollah's latest strikes included dozens of rockets fired on Wednesday into northern Israel, the military said.

China tests intercontinental missile in the Pacific Ocean

Agence France-Presse
BEIJING

China said it test-launched an intercontinental ballistic missile on Wednesday, firing it into the Pacific Ocean in its first such exercise in decades.

The launch sparked protests from other countries in the region, with China's neighbour Japan saying it had not been given advance notice and expressing "serious concern" about Beijing's military build-up.

Thorny issue: The launch sparked protests from other countries in the region such as Japan, Australia and New Zealand. FILE PHOTO

Growing arsenal

Beijing has stepped up its nuclear development and boosted defence spending in recent years, with the Pentagon warning last October that China was developing its arsenal more quickly than the U.S. had anticipated.

China held more than 500 operational nuclear warheads as of May 2023 and is likely to have more than 1,000 by 2030, it said.

Japan said it was given "no notice from the Chinese side in advance", with a government spokesman adding that Beijing's military build-up was a "serious concern".

Australia said it was seeking "an explanation" over the launch. New Zealand also said the launch of the missile, which landed in the South Pacific, was "an unwelcome and concerning development".

At the UN, Zelenksyy urges countries to accept his peace plan

Sriram Lakshman
UNITED NATIONS

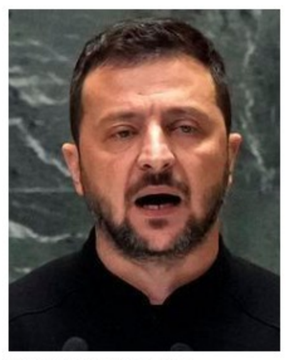
Addressing the 79th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA), Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy warned of the risk of a nuclear accident with Russia's continued occupation of Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia power plant.

Mr. Zelenskyy also suggested his plan for peace was the way forward as resolving the war at the UN was "impossible" because of Russia's veto power at the Security Council.

He reminded the 193-member UNGA that it had passed a resolution (99 in favour, 9 against, 60 abstentions, including India) in July calling on Russia to return control of all nuclear facilities, particularly the plant in Zaporizhzhia, to the Ukrainian authorities.

"Radiation will not respect state borders," he said, warning that, like smoke fires, the fallout from any radioactive incident could spread across Europe and possibly farther afield.

Mr. Zelenskyy told the UNGA that Russia was against his peace proposal, first presented at the G-20 Summit in Indonesia in November 2022, and the peace conference in Switzerland, because in these formulations "all were equal" and no single country could control the process. He warned that the UN was not capable of bringing peace because of



Volodymyr Zelenskyy

Security Council vetoes.

The Ukrainian 10-point peace proposal involves Russia withdrawing completely from Ukraine, including from Crimea, and the restoration of the pre-2014 Russia-Ukraine borders, nuclear safety, food and energy security and accountability for war crimes, among other things.

"When the aggressor exercise veto power, the UN is powerless to stop the war," he said, presenting the Ukrainian peace plan as a viable way forward. He said "half-hearted settlement plans, so-called sets of principles" ignored reality and gave Russian President Vladimir Putin the political space to continue fighting.

He named Brazil and China as possibly having vested interests in coming up with alternative proposals to settle the war. The two countries had come up with a proposal in May to reduce tensions but without requiring Russia to withdraw. Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva mentioned the plan during his UNGA speech on Tuesday.

"When the Chinese-Brazilian duo tries to grow into a choir of voices with someone in Europe, with someone in Africa saying something alternative to a full and just peace, the question arises, what is the true interest?" Mr. Zelenskyy said.

Without naming anyone, he suggested that world leaders who could effect peace were not doing so, hoping for personal recognition. "The peace formula has already existed for two years, and maybe somebody wants a Nobel Prize for their political biography, for frozen truce instead of real peace, but the only prizes Putin will give you in return are more suffering and disasters."

"War always poses a threat to many," he said, adding, " but the deepest understanding of war is found in the homes it destroys." He listed a number of countries, whose leaders he had met, including India, and said that every one of them understood the need for a "real, just peace".

Mr. Zelenskyy had bilateral talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday evening in New York. India had been conveying information between the two warring parties in the hope that it would hasten peace, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said on Tuesday.

Will begin talks with IMF, says Dissanayake

Meera Srinivasan
COLOMBO

Sri Lanka will swiftly begin talks with the IMF to take its ongoing programme forward and expedite negotiations with its external creditors for debt relief, President Anura Kumara Dissanayake said.

The message, his first televised address to the nation, was aired on Wednesday evening. "The change we seek involves many steps that will take time. However, achieving stability and confidence in the current economy is crucial," Mr. Dissanayake said.

While sections have voiced concern over the leftist leader's possible stance on the country's ongoing IMF programme, Mr. Dissanayake's address made clear – as did his poll manifesto – that his government would not steer away from the IMF-led course of economic recovery. All the same, the ruling alliance said it would renegotiate certain elements of the Fund's package, especially its austerity measures. Further, Mr. Dissanayake said the country needed a Parliament that "accurately reflects" the will of the people. "The existing Parliament does not represent that will. Therefore, I took the step yesterday to dissolve it."

Sport

Holder Railways enters semifinals with a hard-fought victory over BPCL

HOCKEY

Sports Bureau
CHENNAI

Defending champion Indian Railways shut BPCL out of the 95th MCC-Murugappa Gold Cup All-India hockey tournament here on Wednesday, in a match full of twists and turns.

With the 5-4 win over the former champion, Railways qualified for the semifinals with a match to spare. In its last Pool-A match on Thursday, Railways will take on Tamil Nadu. From Pool-A, Army is the other team that has made it to the last four, after it registered a 2-1 victory over Maharashtra.

Edging through: Joginder scored a brace for Raiways in a match full of twists and turns. M. VEDHAN

There was hardly a dull moment in the tie between Railways and BPCL.

Leading 4-2 going into the fourth quarter, Railways held the edge. But BPCL wouldn't go down without a fight as it forced three consecutive penalty corners at the beginning of the quarter. Railways, however, held firm. BPCL continued to attack with gusto and equalised in a matter of three minutes through a brace from former international Devindar Walmiki.

Railways had the last laugh when Darshan Gawkar converted.

The results: Pool A: Indian Army 2 (Cyril Lugun 13, Akshay Dubey 41) bt Maharashtra 1 (Venkatesh Kenche 46).
Indian Railways 5 (Joginder Singh 9 & 35, Parampreet Singh 13, Gursahibjit Singh 28, Darshan Gawkar 58) bt BPCL 4 (Devinder Walmiki 3, 57 & 54, Rajinder Singh 14). **Pool B:** Karnataka 6 (Ganesh Majji 4 & 19, Chelsea Madappa 22 & 30, Deekshith 11 & 35) bt Central Secretariat 1 (Karthi Selvam 47).
The semifinalists: Pool-A: Railways & Army; **B:** IOC & Odisha.

Srikanth leads Indian charge into the second round

BADMINTON

Press Trust of India
MACAU

K. Srikanth, Ayush Shetty and Tasnim Mir advanced to the singles second round at the Macau Open Super 300 badminton on Wednesday.

In his first competition since recovering from an injury sustained in May, sixth seed Srikanth outclassed Israel's Daniil Dubovenko 21-14, 21-15. Ayush defeated India's Alap Mishra 21-13, 21-5 while Tasnim won over Devika Sihag 15-21, 21-18, 22-20.

Easing through: Srikanth was hardly troubled by Dubovenko. FILE PHOTO

The results (first round): Men: K. Srikanth bt Daniil Dubovenko 21-14, 21-15; Ayush Shetty bt Alap Mishra 21-13, 21-5; Ng Ka Long Angus bt Chirag Sen 21-12, 21-17; Wang Zheng Xing bt Sameer Verma 18-21, 21-11, 21-13; Huang Yu Kai bt Mithun Manjunath 21-12, 21-15; Panitchaphon Teeraratsakul bt S. Sankar Muthusamy 21-14, 10-21, 21-12. **Women:** Tasnim Mir bt Devika Sihag 15-21, 21-18, 22-20; Liang Ting Yu bt Tanya Hemanth 21-18, 21-19; Riko Gunji bt Anupama Upadhyaya 21-12, 20-22, 21-7; Wu Luo Yu bt Isharani Baruah 21-7, 21-15. **Mixed doubles:** B. Sumeeth Reddy and N. Sikki Reddy bt Loo Bing Kun and Ho Lo Ee 24-22, 10-21, 21-13; Rittanapak Oupthong and Jhenicha Sudjaipraparat bt Rohan Kapoor and Ruthvika Shivani Gadde 23-21, 24-22.

PROLIFIC

Ashwin on cusp of becoming first Indian to 100 fourth-innings scalps

SANDEEP SAXENA

R. Ashwin is just one wicket away from becoming the first Indian to scalp 100 wickets in the fourth innings of Test matches. 99 out of Ashwin's 522 Test scalps have come from fourth essays. The most prolific bowler in the final innings is Shane Warne with 138 wickets to his credit.

HOME COMFORTS

Akash looking forward to playing in Green Park Stadium

SANDEEP SAXENA

India's Akash Deep is excited about playing in Kanpur. "I am from Varanasi, which is not far from here. As a kid, I had heard of Green Park Stadium. I thought it was because the whole ground was green. I hadn't seen any stadiums at the time. I remembered after coming here that the first stadium I had heard of was Green Park."

MOVING ON

'Didn't have inspiration left to play domestic cricket for national spot'

FILE PHOTO: R.V. MOORTHY

Shikhar Dhawan on Wednesday revealed that he didn't have the "inspiration" left to take the domestic cricket route for a place in the national side and that was the reason why he chose to retire from the game. "I didn't want to play domestic cricket... I didn't have that inspiration from inside to play that (form of) cricket," Dhawan said.

TERRIFIC TON

Skipper Brook keeps England alive in Australia one-day series

Harry Brook's maiden ODI century revived England's series hopes against Australia as it beat the world champion by 46 runs in the third ODI at Chester-le-Street on Tuesday. **The scores:** Australia 304/7 in 50 overs lost to England 254/4 in 37.4 overs (Jacks 84, Brook 110 n.o.) *England won by 46 runs (DLS method).*

Akash Deep quietly making a mark with vital contributions

Pacer says rigours of domestic cricket prepare players for the international game; praises Rohit Sharma's captaincy and for his guidance with handling pressure; sees playing for India as a responsibility

CRICKET

S. Dipak Ragav
KANPUR

These are the early days of Akash Deep's Test career, having played just two matches, but the pacer has quietly left a mark already through his vital contributions to the team's victories.

In his debut against England in Ranchi, he took three wickets in his first spell, which included knocking over Zak Crawley. He had, in fact, bowled Crawley once off a no-ball before making amends.

Then, against Bangladesh last week in Chennai, the 27-year-old rearranged Zakir Hasan's and Mominul Haque's stumps off successive deliveries, with the ball jagging back into the left-handers and breaching their defence.

Think-tank: Gambhir and Rohit could well be discussing the strategy to ensure a sweep of the Test series against Bangladesh. SANDEEP SAXENA

Dream come true

"Playing for India is every kid's dream. It is something to be proud of.

"But, I also see that it is a responsibility," said Akash when asked about joining the National team when India is having one of its best pace attacks.

Ahead of a long winter in which India has nine more Tests over the next three months, including five in Australia, the Bengal fast bowler could be a key weapon in India's pace arsenal.

The uncertainty over Mohammed Shami's comeback after an Achilles tendon surgery makes Akash's role in the side even more crucial.

With a bowling style similar to Shami's and the ability to move the ball both ways while attacking the stumps, Akash could be ready to take over from his state teammate when the time comes.

"When you are playing in place of bowlers who have contributed to the country, then, along with being proud, I feel that I have to do something for my country," he said ahead of the second Test starting here on Friday. On his journey so far and his future goals, Akash commented that he was not looking too far ahead.

Staying in the present

"I have worked on my strengths and what I can add to my bowling. I have thought about a few things. When I play here, it is simple. I don't put extra pressure on myself that I have to go to Australia or some other big series. I stay in the present and think about this match."

The speedster praised the rigours of domestic cricket for preparing players for the highest-level.

"The domestic structure is so good that when you reach here, you already know many things. So, you get an idea of your bowling and what you must do. I don't find anything new here."

Akash also praised Rohit Sharma's captaincy and how he eased him into international cricket.

"When I came into the team, I had some hesitation and confusion about handling pressure. But (Rohit) bhaiya made things simple for me, that I didn't know if I was playing domestic or international cricket," he said.

Harmanpreet eyes success in her historic ninth T20 World Cup appearance

Amol Karhadkar
MUMBAI

She has been the torchbearer of India's transition onto the big stage – combining textbook batting with power-hitting – for a decade and a half.

Come next week, Harmanpreet Kaur will join a band of 'Super Six' to have featured in each of the nine ICC Women's T20 World Cup editions.

While Harmanpreet will be the only Indian to have achieved the feat, others in the club will include Suzie Bates (New Zealand), Sophie Devine (England), Marizanne Kapp (South Africa), Ellyse Perry (Australia) and Chamari Athapaththu (Sri Lanka).

More than being proud of being the only Indian woman – and second India cricketer – to have achieved the feat, Harmanpreet is focused on using all her experience to help fulfil her dream of lifting an elusive ICC trophy.

"I have played so many World Cups and that experience and atmosphere is totally different to any other tournament," the India captain said before the squad departed for the United Arab Emirates.

"I am going with the same excitement as I had when I was just a 19-year-old. I just want to go there and enjoy myself. I know now I have so much experience with me."

In fact, there is no dearth of experience in Harmanpreet's team that has set out to attain glory. Only three cricketers from India's 15-member squad are yet to feature in a T20 World Cup.

Harmanpreet's form, though, has been wobbly of late. Perhaps it's got to do with her decision to push herself slightly down the order in recent games. The captain has managed to notch up just two fifties since the last T20 World Cup. Her T20I numbers since then include 368 runs from 17 innings (22 matches) at a strike rate of 116.

But Harmanpreet is not at all concerned with her form. "I know what the pressure is like and how I am going to handle it. (It is about playing) with full freedom and just not thinking about the result."

The only Indian man to have featured in every T20 World Cup so far - Rohit Sharma - did change a lot of things and lifted the trophy as captain in June. Will Harmanpreet repeat the feat next month?

Aiming for glory: Muzumdar will be banking on Harmanpreet's experience to come to the fore. EMMANUAL YOGINI

Shakib is available for selection: Hathurusingha

S. Dipak Ragav
KANPUR

Amidst the persistent rumours surrounding the fitness of Shakib Al Hasan, who got hit on his finger during the first Test against India in Chennai, Bangladesh head coach Chandika Hathurusingha said the star all-rounder is available for selection for the second Test starting here on Friday.

"Regarding Shakib, there is no doubt, at the moment. I have not heard anything from the physio or anyone else. He is eligible for selection," said Hathurasingha on Wednesday.

The 37-year-old left-hander batted only briefly during the practice session on Wednesday.

Form factor

When asked if there were concerns about Shakib's form, who went wicketless in the first match and managed scores of only 32 and 25, the coach insisted it was not the case.

"I'm upset, not about his (Shakib's) performance but our overall performance. We could have done better.

Shakib Al Hasan...in the running. SANDEEP SAXENA

"I'm sure that he also thinks that he can perform better. We all know what he's capable of. He batted well in the second innings but couldn't go on. It is not because of a lack of pride. It's the sheer quality of the opposition."

Top-order blues

Following the 280-run defeat in the first match, the former Sri Lankan player highlighted the top-order batters' failure to convert their starts as an area to work on.

"The concern is that what we talk about, whether we are able to do that in the middle. We have the Key Performance Indicators about what we want, and we normally talk about if you make a start, make it big.

"We are concerned that they are getting a start and getting out. I'm sure the players are more disappointed as well. We didn't do justice to our talent or potential in the last game," Hathurasingha remarked.

"Some of the guys got 30 balls. In cricket, it's the hardest thing to get in. But then, India has been posing different challenges, and we know that as well. So we have to be better for longer," he added.

India's young talent could do better with more sponsorship and government support

CHESS

P.K. Ajith Kumar

India is celebrating the country's historic twin gold at Budapest, and the World champions had a meeting with the Prime Minister in New Delhi on Wednesday.

But, not many know how difficult the families of some bright young stars are finding to support their career.

International chess is expensive. You have to play abroad regularly and coaches are very costly (the best of them charge something like ₹7,000 per hour).

Not all the big names have big sponsorship deals. Divya Deshmukh was the rock of the Indian women's team at the Chess Olympiad.

She played all the 11 rounds, won eight of them and drew three. She won the individual gold, on the third board, in addition to India's historic team gold.

Memorable moment: Prime Minister Narendra Modi was presented with an autographed chessboard during an interaction with Olympiad-winning teams at his residence on Wednesday. PTI

She is ranked No. 15th in the world among women and should be moving up when the next FIDE rating list comes out next week.

Back in June, she won the World junior championship at Ahmedabad. She is the World No. 1 in the junior girls' ranking list. Last year she won the Tata Steel Chess India blitz title after beginning her campaign as the tenth seed in a field of ten. And she is only 18. She is indeed the most promising player in women's chess in India at the moment.

Divya's father, a Nagpur-based doctor, once told this correspondent, smiling, "I am her sponsor."

Some of India's biggest prodigies have long-term sponsorships though – like R. Praggnanandhaa, Arjun Erigaisi and Nihal Sarin.

But there are several young Indian players who could do much better with such substantial support. Grandmaster Pravin Thipsay believes S.L. Narayanan would have done much better than his current world ranking of 98 if he had a good sponsor at the right time.

Talent should not suffer because of the lack of support.

₹3.2 crore reward for Olympiad champions

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The All India Chess Federation announced a reward of ₹3.2 crore for the Chess Olympiad-winning Indian teams during a felicitation ceremony here on Wednesday.

Each player from the winning teams will receive ₹25 lakh, while the coaches Abhijit Kunte and Srinath Narayanan will be rewarded with ₹15 lakh each. Dibyendu Barua, head of the delegation, will receive ₹10 lakh, and the assistant coaches would be rewarded ₹7.5 lakh.

Desire for success

"The hunger for gold ended in Hungary, but the desire for success continues. In the Open section we dominated and in women's section we owned it," AICF president Nitin Narang said at the felicitation.

"Our players are sharp shooters on the chessboard. The seeds planted by Vishwanathan Anand have grown into a forest."

INBRIEF

Real Madrid survives a late scare from Alaves

Kylian Mbappe struck for the fourth consecutive game as Real Madrid survived a late scare to beat Alaves 3-2 in La Liga on Tuesday.

The results: LaLiga: Sevilla 2 (Torres 45-og, Ejuke 85) bt Valladolid 1 (Perez 56); Valencia 0 drew with Osasuna 0; Real Madrid 3 (Vazquez 1, Mbappe 40, Rodrygo 48) bt Alaves 2 (Protesoni 85, Garcia 86).
Serie A: Atalanta 2 (Zappacosta 18, Lookman 90+9-pen) lost to Como 3 (Strefezza 46, Kolasinac 54-og, Fadera 58).

Indian round of MotoGP postponed to 2026

The Indian round of the MotoGP championship was on Wednesday postponed to 2026 with the organisers citing "operational circumstances" as the reason behind another delay. The Indian Grand Prix was earlier scheduled to be held in September but was deferred to March 2025. Now, it can only be held in the early stages of 2026.

Chawla wins gold in World 6-red snooker

India's Kamal Chawla clinched his maiden IBSF men's World 6-red title with a 6-2 victory over Pakistan's Asjad Iqbal in the final in Ulaanbaatar on Wednesday. India also bagged three more bronze medals through Malkeet Singh, Vidya Pillai and Keerthana Pandian.

LIVE TELECAST

Sri Lanka vs New Zealand: 2nd Test, day 1, Sony Sports Ten 5 (SD & HD) & LIV, 10 a.m.
ISL: Sports 18-3 & JioCinema, 7.30 p.m.
Europa League: Sony Sports Ten 1, 2, 3 & 5 (SD & HD) & LIV, 12.30 a.m. (Friday)
LaLiga: gxr.world, 12.30 a.m. (Friday)

Punjab downs Hyderabad, continues in its merry way

The home team's 2-0 win takes it to the top of the table with three victories from three outings; Singto's men, languishing at the bottom with two losses in as many games, have their task cut out; HFC's D'Cunha gets ejected for a second yellow

ISL

Uthra Ganesan
NEW DELHI

Punjab FC kept an unchanged line-up and a clean sheet for the first time this season, notching up its third consecutive win in as many games to go top of the Indian Super League table with a dominant 2-0 win against a struggling Hyderabad FC here on Wednesday.

With a comparatively bigger crowd support, Punjab started on the front foot, missing its first real chance as early as the seventh minute when Mushaga Bakenga hit the upright. At the other end, Ramhlunchhunga's shot in the 12th minute was saved by Punjab goalkeeper Ravi Kumar in one of the few chances that the visitor had. A couple of wasted assists and nasty tackles later, Ezequiel Vidal finally took it upon himself to break the deadlock, giving Punjab the opening goal in the 35th minute, slotting a free kick into the bottom left. Punjab doubled its score when Filip Mrzjlak tapped into an empty goal from a narrow angle in the 71st.

Breaking the deadlock: Vidal opened the scoring for Punjab.
SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

His through ball to Bakenga was saved by Hyderabad custodian Arshdeep Singh but that left him completely out of position and with an absent defence, Mrzjlak had all the time in the world to get his second of the season. The Croat could have scored a couple more but hit off target - and Bakenga hit a few wide as well - even as Hyderabad struggled to match Punjab's pace, especially on the break.

Hyderabad's night kept getting worse as the match went on, a second yellow for Leander D'Cunha reducing it to 10 men for the final 15 minutes. Having won only one match through the entire last season, head coach Thangboi Singto will have his job cut out in the coming days.

The result: Punjab FC 2 (Ezequiel Vidal 35, Filip Mrzjlak 71) bt Hyderabad FC 0.

India thumps Mongolia in AFC u-20 Asian Cup Qualifiers

Press Trust of India
VIENTIANE (LAOS)

India defeated Mongolia 4-1 to begin its campaign in the AFC under-20 Asian Cup foorball Qualifiers on a winning note here on Wednesday. The teams were locked 1-1 at half-time, but India stepped up in the second session to leave Mongolia's defence in tatters.Kelvin Singh Taorem (20th minute), Manglenthang Kipgen (51st and 54th), and Korou Singh Thingujam (85th) were the scorers for India while Temulen Uuganbat struck the solitary goal for Mongolia in the 45th minute. Iran and hosts Laos are the other two teams in Group G.

SNAPSHOTS

NADA serves whereabouts failure notice to Vinesh

The National Anti-Doping Agency on Wednesday served a notice to wrestler Vinesh Phogat for whereabouts failure and sought an explanation within 14 days.
The NADA conveyed to Vinesh that she had apparently committed a whereabouts failure as she was not available for a dope test on September 9 at her house in Sonepat. "You are hereby given a formal notice to notify you about apparent failure to comply with the whereabouts requirements of the ADR," the NADA notice read. Vinesh needs to either accept the failure or provide evidence that she was present in that location for about 60 minutes.

World wrestling c'ships selection trials

Selection trials for the upcoming World wrestling championships, to be held in Tirana, Albania, from October 28 to 31, will be organised at the Virendra Sports and Education Academy, Narela, Delhi, on October 7.

In the Olympic year, trials will be held in non-Olympic weights: freestyle (61kg, 70kg, 79kg and 92kg), Greco Roman (55kg, 63kg, 72kg, 82kg) and women (55kg, 59kg, 65kg, 72kg).

KARNATAKA ROUND-UP

Khush Kothari stars for President's XI with a 11-wicket match-haul

BENGALURU: Khush Kothari recorded a 11-wicket match-haul for President's XI against Tumkur Zone in the KSCA under-16 inter-zonal tournament here.

The scores: Tumkur Zone 95 in 65.5 overs (Akhil 51, Khush Kothari 8/19) and 105/5 in 42 overs (Rohith Reddy 32, A.A. Rohith 26, Khush Kothari 3/35) drew with President's XI 227/6 in 64 overs (Dhruv Modhe 55, Vismay Raj 105 n.o., Atharv Deshpande 42, P. Abhishek 3/59).

Vice President's XI 251 in 75 overs (Devanjan Sarkar 29, Dhruv Krishnan 53, Krushna Rao 46, Vedaraj Yadav 49, Vishwa Venkatadri 3/28) and 141/5 in 36.4 overs (M.S. Kunal 30, Dhruv Krishnan 54) drew with Bangalore City XI 167 in 57.3 overs (S.P. Banesh 42, N.S. Shaurya 30, Nirag Chethan 4/11).

Shivamogga Zone 141 in 59.2 overs (M.A. Jeevan 45, Jnana Prabhu 28, D.B. Kushmith 4/43) and 97 in 36 overs (M.A. Jeevan 31, Samarth Kulakarni 3/17, Mahesh Hiremath 3/17) lost to Mysore Zone 174 in 66.4 overs (K.M. Dheemanth 30, Jateen Dinesh 28, Mahesh Hiremath 25, Samarth Kulakarni 32, Preetham Raj 3/30) and 66/3 in 12.1 overs (Chavanth Gowda 31).

Mangalore Zone 142 in 57.5 overs (Surya Thribhuvan 27, Sharmod Kumar 37, C. Vihaan 40, Arya Gowda 3/37) and 117/6 in 37 overs (Ayush Acharya 25, Rennell Pais 30, Surya Thribhuvan 26 n.o.) drew with Secretary's XI 318/5 in 90 overs (Adhrit Rao 51, Abhinav Kulkarni 138, Arya Gowda 61, R. Parth 29 n.o.).

Raichur Zone 278 in 84.1 overs (Basava Chetan 32, Rehan 29, Suprit 102, Adarsh Rathod 31, Samarth Kulkarni 36, Arnav Kundap 4/38) and 125/5 in 36.2 overs (Ahmed Ali 29, Rehan 51, Suprit 25) drew with Dharwad Zone 89 in 43.3 overs (Arnav Kundap 35, Samarth Kulkarni 3/21).

Bangalore Zone 259 in 67.3 overs (Jayan Samyog 47, Anvay Dravid 49, Prajwal Gowda 75, Milan Dhami 35, Gagan Sai 4/69, Arun Mishra 5/54) and 61/3 in 19 overs (Ashrith Reddy 26 n.o.) drew with Combined City XI 213 in 84 overs (G. Pranav 30, Syaamantak Anirudh 44, G.K. Saivarun 40, Gagan Sai 26, H.N. Karthik 29, Aryansh Singh 5/28).

Krunal Pandya hits a ton as Baroda calls the shots

Krunal Pandya (114) starred for Baroda CA against Maharashtra CA on the second day of their KSCA-Dr. Capt. K. Thimmappiah memorial tournament final here.

The score: Final: Maharashtra CA 127 and 121/5 in 34 overs (Ankeet Bawane 31 n.o., Azim Kazi 33, Lukman Meriwala 3/33) vs. Baroda CA 398 in 74.2 overs (Mitesh Patel 77, Krunal Pandya 114, Raj Limbani 49, Bhargav Bhatt 37, Ramkrishan Ghosh 4/86, Rajvardhan Hangargekar 4/91).